

The Magazine for Nice People!

BRUTARIAN

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#30

With
Loose
Lips



TROMA's
Lloyd
Kaufman



The
Kowalskis

Trailer
Bride

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The Dirty Danny Legal Defense Fund

PO Box 428 Old Chelsea Station
New York, NY 10113-0428

A QUICK AND HIGHLY-OPINIONATED SKETCH OF THE RALL V. HELLMAN LAWSUIT **By Danny Hellman**

The Rall v. Hellman lawsuit has gotten a modest amount of coverage in the press, (articles have appeared in the New York Press, The New York Observer, the Village Voice, and The Comics Journal), but for those of you who aren't unfamiliar with the case, I'll attempt a brief explanation:

On August 3rd, 1999, the Village Voice published a feature story written by cartoonist and journalist Ted Rall, in which he made wild and unsubstantiated claims that legendary cartoonist Art Spiegelman holds the New York publishing world in some sort of tyrannical grip, making success for any aspiring cartoonist or illustrator impossible without first having to kiss the master's ring. As a moderately successful New York-based illustrator myself, who has never had any contact whatsoever with Art Spiegelman, I immediately saw Rall's thesis to be false.

And I was just one of many who were appalled by this specious hatchet job. When Russ Smith, the publisher of the New York Press wrote an editorial

criticizing Rall's Voice feature, I was overjoyed to contribute the accompanying illustration, which depicted Rall as a small dog urinating on a bronze statue of the Pulitzer Prize-winning MAUS author. In hindsight, I wish I'd let that illustration be the final expression of my disgust with Rall's anti-Spiegelman slam-piece, but I let my strong feelings about the Voice feature get the better of me.

I felt that Rall's nose required a little additional tweaking, and unfortunately decided to play a small e-mail prank on him. The now-infamous "Ted Rall's Balls" prank involved my writing of a parodic statement under Rall's name, which I e-mailed to a list of approximately thirty friends and acquaintances in the comics community, as well as to Rall himself. I then followed up the first message with faked angry responses, which seemed to be coming from famous figures in the publishing industry. (the complete text of the prank can be found at my website: www.dannyhellman.com)

I maintain that this prank was utterly harmless; the virtual

equivalent of a "whoopie cushion". Sensitive soul that he is, Rall declared the prank to be anything but harmless.

Within 48 hours of the start of the prank, I received letters from Rall's lawyers demanding a retraction, and apology, and \$20,000 in financial compensation. I immediately complied with Rall's request for both the apology and retraction, (the apology is also up at my website for public inspection). I felt that Rall's insistence on financial compensation was both ridiculous and opportunistic, so I initially declined to offer any cash.

Within days, I discovered that Rall had filed a lawsuit against me in the New York State Supreme Court, charging me with Libel, Libel Per Se, Injurious Falsehood Invasion of Privacy, and Intentional Infliction of Emotional Distress. The amount of damages asked for in the suit was \$1.5 million dollars; a figure that I am sure you will agree is both outrageous and laughable. It was at this point that I offered Rall's lawyer a \$1000 settlement; apparently this was not the fig-

ure they'd had in mind. Subsequently, I had no choice but to retain my own lawyer to defend myself, and my bleak march towards bankruptcy began.

It's now been over five months since Rall filed his lawsuit against me, and as you might imagine, my financial situation is getting desperate. I've paid over \$11,000.00 out of pocket in legal expenses; an additional \$7000 which we raised at a benefit concert last December has ALSO been spent on legal fees. We are currently organizing a second benefit concert, as well as a benefit comic book, in order to raise public awareness of the case, as well as much-needed cash.

I don't know if any of you have ever been on the receiving end of a lawsuit; those of you who have understand what an emotionally devastating situation it is. We have gone through months of anxiety riding this runaway roller coaster; only the vengeful individual at the controls knows when it will end.

—Danny Hellman

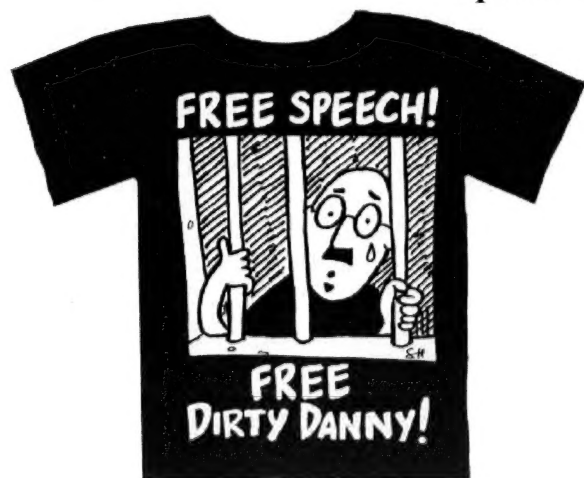
dannyhellman@mindspring.com

READ MORE ABOUT THE RALL V. HELLMAN LAWSUIT AT THE FOLLOWING URLS ON THE INTERNET:

<http://www.dannyhellman.com>

OR VISIT THE OFFICIAL FREE DIRTY DANNY WEBSITE (HOSTED BY MIKE SPERANZA) AT:

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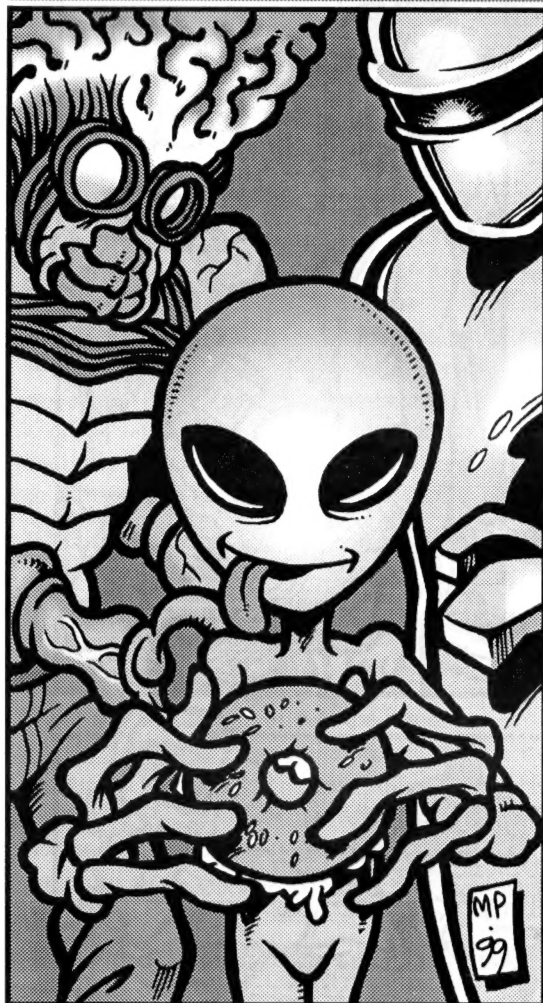
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Brutarian

#30

The narwhal issue



ARTISTS -

-Big Josh McAlear -

Remember the Big Jim doll from the 70's, that kinda midget cousin to G.I. Joe with a serious tan? We do. And we loved his bad guys, like the Chinese karate guy with the metal hand and that Indian guy. Cool.

-S.M. Taggart - Nuthin' funny to say about Sean. Except that he's gay.

-Chris Krolczyk - Draws big. I mean *really* big.

-Bruno Nadalin - This boy's about as sick as Mike Diana—except he can actually draw. And he's actually funny.

-Danny Hellman - He was late again with his column... too busy partying with his new butt-buddy Coop.

-Mark Poutenis - Nothing's worse then when your new puppy crosses that horrible line... eatin' the cat poop from the litter box. Oh, the humanity.

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Wrestling legends fear them, Giuliani hates them, we love them

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New Mexicano's revolt! For Freedom! And for Punk Rock! Yeah!

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Sink ships and all that crap . . .

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Those Jerry Springer people gotta come from somewhere . . . and they're probably listening to this band.

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Dirty, stinking, toxic filmmaker discusses life, liberty and why Hollywood sucks

BOHEMIA

Authors and actors and artists and such

Never know nothing, and never know much.

Sculptors and singers and those of their kidney

Tell their affairs from Seattle to Sydney.

Playwrights and poets and such horses' necks

Start off from anywhere, end up at sex.

Diarists, critics, and similar roe

Never say nothing, and never say no. People Who Do Things exceed my endurance;

God, for a man that solicits insurance!

- Dorothy Parker

COVER - lil' Johnny Ryan - Great. Just freakin' great. I can just see now, that bastard Ryan is gonna get us sued by those *New Screw Revue* idiots Sid & Marty Kroft or whoever made that Goddamn puppet nightmare.

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by Bruno Nadalin



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Editor/Love changes everything: dom salemi Art Director/Actually feels bad for Gary Glitter: mark poutenis Web-chimp: david fitzgerald

Layout assist from the "South of the North (Maine)": our man ethan Went to Frisco and discovered something called "docking": danny hellman Saving Grace: new addition Kirby the freakin' Wonderdog, the failure of the Knicks, bad Batgirl nude art on e-bay, Bosstones' *Riot on Broadstreet*

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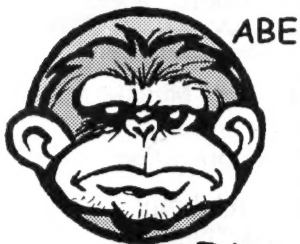
back issues --- \$6, which is incredibly cheap for government nuclear secrets and monkey training tips

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THE THINKING APE BLUES

by Mark Poutenis

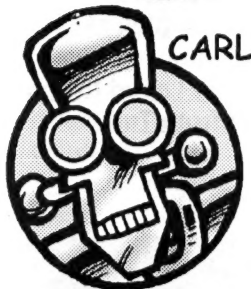
STARRING THE
PROGRESS
BROS.



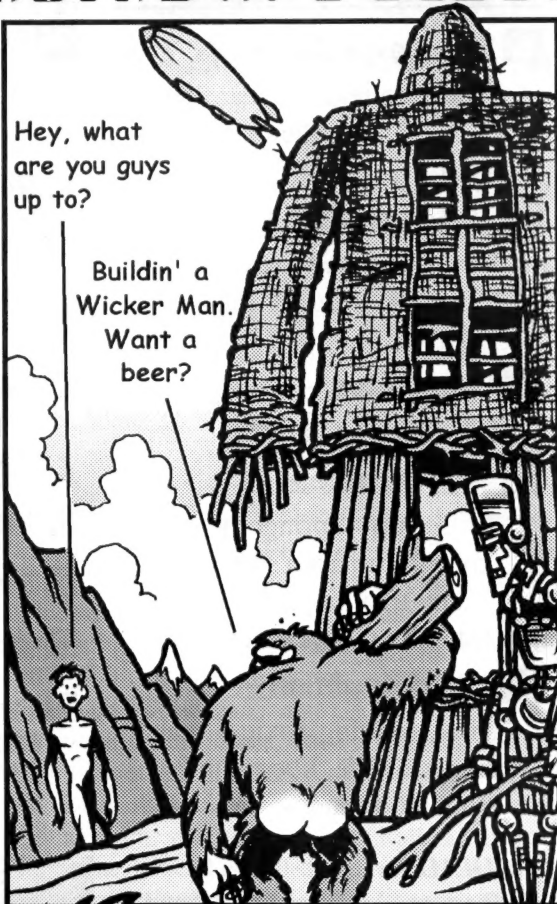
ABE



BEN



CARL



Hey, what are you guys up to?

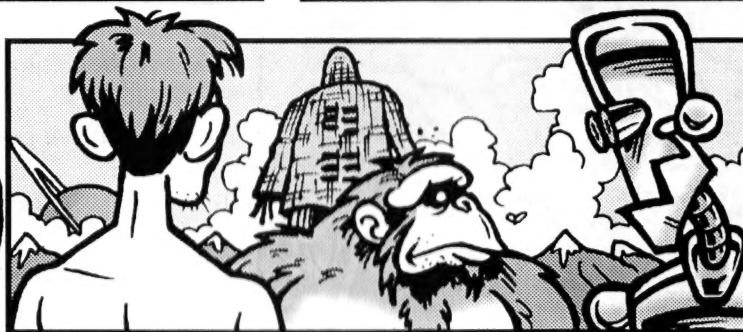
Buildin' a Wicker Man. Want a beer?



A Wicker Man, huh? Cool. Sort of a pagan ritual thing? An antenna to God, huh?

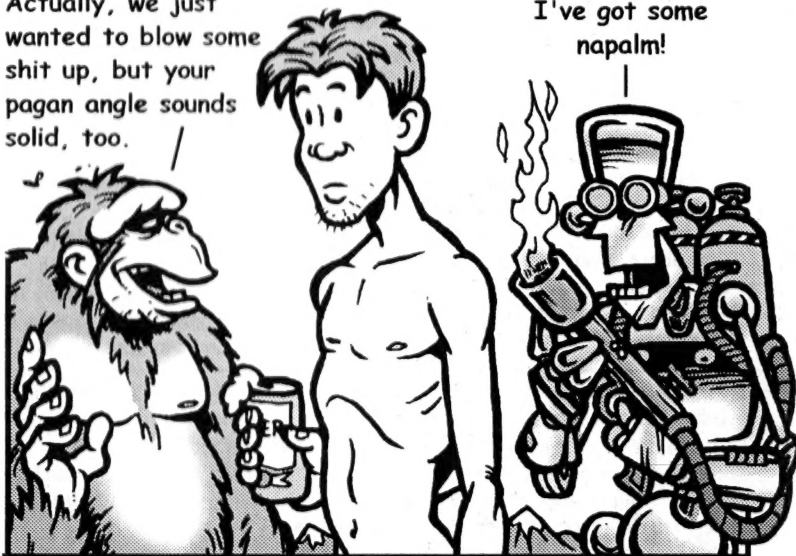
Uh, yeah...

So you build this wicker giant, a symbol of God and man, in our image, and set it on fire as a cleansing gesture, a sacrifice to the creator, that it?



Actually, we just wanted to blow some shit up, but your pagan angle sounds solid, too.

I've got some napalm!



©2000 MARK POUTENIS

—END—



Hey men,

You know what's funny? I never was beautiful, never will be. Yet for the last decade I've been promoted as some sort of sex-sybol. I'm just another mule-faced anorexic with a great agent. And vehicular murderer for a husband. Jeez, all you gotta do is binge and purge and wear a slip as a dress and you meat heads will buy anything.

Sarah Jessica "Mr. Ed" Parker,
on the set of *Sex in the Stable*

Let me just say this:

There is absolutely no truth to the rumor that the Federal Bureau of Prisons sponsored the recent National Football League Draft. Moreover, it is nothing but a vicious rumor as to the name change to the National Felons League. There is some talk as to a Criminals Hall of Fame for some of our more noteworthy transgressors, however. Public sentiment seems to demand it.

The Commish
Sing Sing, NY

Sirs,

I am herewith submitting my application to become chief of operations of the National Football League. I think the new direction in which the NFL is going vis-a-vis support for off field rape, mayhem and murder leaves me the most imminently qualified person to lead the League at this time. Let me add, at this time, that if you don't hire me, I will kill you.

O. J. Simpson
In-Hiding-But-Not-Really, CA

Hello folks:

I'm no felon, but certainly my mike work on my syndicated show is "criminally" irresponsible. In fact, you could label my a "crypto-Nazi" and you wouldn't be far

wrong. Therefore, I think I'd be the perfect as the new color guy for Monday Night Football. That's "color guy", not "colored guy". Fucking liberal media.

Rush Limbaugh
Aryan, Montana

Look,

I did invent the Internet. I did. I just got the date wrong. Which is understandable because that date was the day I invented the bong.

Al "Mr. Hit" Gore
Bogart, Tenn

Fellow Gringos :

Hell no, I'm not going back to Cuba! Have you seen the chickie they had taking care of me? Ay carumba! and she's bought the story that we don't stop breast feeding our little one's in Cuba until they're fourteen years old. Screw Havana, send me back to the Miami getto!

Elian "Little Boy" Gonzalez
Woody Air Force Base, DC

Dear Pussies,

What the Hell is the problem with you people now? So the fucking tyke gets a little traumatized by having an MK-47 stuck next to his head. You're lucky we didn't use normal FBI procedure: tear gas, followed by flame throwers followed by 72,000 rounds of bullets. Don't piss off Gigantor . . . remember, I wrestled alligators.

Janet "The Bully" Reno
Dykesville, Maryland

Y'all,

Ahm jest so ter'ble reliev'd! Ah had hoid t'at dere was a massacre at t'our Nation's Capital Zoo and Ah had fear'd for the woist. Afta all, t'ey is so manah lovelee aminals at t'zoo. T'en I done hoid t'was only a bunch a nigras scufflin'. What ahm wonderin' is

who was da stupid who done let dem crittas out a t'ere cages?

Sen. Strom Thurmond
Racistbastid, SC

Dear Sirs:

To those of you worried about my bringing my homophobic, racist and misogynist antics to my new XFL league, I say relax. We're just going to play old fashioned slobber-knocker football. Fans know it too, that's why our New York Niggerbaiters and Los Angeles Fagbashers franchises have already sold out for the 2001 season. Are the Redskins for sale?

Vince J. McMahon
Steroidrage, Ct

Dear Yankee roundeyes:

We are most happy to see that Time Warner has learned valuable lessons from methods of broadcasting in our own glorious country.

Mao Tse Tung
Communist Hall of Heroes,
Beijing, China

Dear Brutarian:

I'm writing because I didn't know who else to turn to. Those stuck-up prisses at PBS piss me off. I went to a taping of *The Antiques Roadshow* in Raleigh to get a treasured family heirloom I got in Asia appraised and those candyasses just drew blanks. Oh sure, they have dozens of queerbaits named Winston or Blaine who can tell you every minute detail about some faggy porcelain turn of the century dolly, but do you think they'd have one bastard who could quote me a price on a mummified North Vietnamese soldier's head? Hell no! Christ, it even has all his teeth intact.

Lt. Calley
Babykiller, North Carolina



Well, when we first heard the name, The Kowalskis, we thought Vince MacMahon had lured the pug-ugly, cauliflowered-eared, septuagenarian wrestling great out of retirement and into a recording studio. We know it sounds implausible but it's not like there aren't any precedents: Remember Classy Freddy Blassie's King of Men and Pencil Neck Geek singles released in the 70s? There was that Capt. Lou thing with Albano and NRBQ that got a lot of alternative FM play about the same time too, wasn't there? What about those full length 70s WWF discs which had even talentless nobodies like Hillbilly Jim



art by BIG JOSH McALEAR!

airing out their pipes? Let us not forget, too, Handsome Dick Manitoba of the Dictators.

So you see there s precedent for our foolish presumptions and thus we called The Kowalski s record company and asked for an interview with The Killer as he is known in the trade. Imagine our surprise when we were informed that although The Kowalskis were indeed named after the grappling great but were a New York pop punk band led by a lithe and lovely young lass named Kitty. This didn t sit too well with us but after getting the band s debut disc in the mail and playing it a few times we had to admit we were impressed. So much so that we decided to let Kitty talk to us. The other members of the band put in more than their two cents and were quite amusing and articulate, but alas they were drowned out by the music on the p.a. system and thus their apercus and bon mots, regrettably, cannot be included here. Read on, friend:

BRUTARIAN: First of all, is there anything you don t want to talk about.

KITTY: Sex with animals, anything else is fair game.

BRUT: You ve had sex with animals?

KITTY: Some men in my life left a lot to be desired but if you re talking about critters you re talking crazy.

BRUT: OK, you were co-owner of one of the premier rock clubs on the East Coast, Coney Island High, it recently went belly-up, what happened?

KITTY: Well, we opened the place with a crooked partner who put us in the hole for about a hundred grand. Then another partner came in and added another \$40,000. So by the time I came in to be a hands on manager we were already \$140,000 in the hole. So it was either owe the government lots of money or stop paying rent and so we just stopped paying rent. The landlord wasn t too happy about this but he let us stay for awhile and while I was there I made sure he got something but he lived in the area and finally decided he could get more from somebody else and so he just kicked us out finally.

BRUT: What happened with Giuliani before Coney Island finally closed its doors?





KITTY: One of the reasons we had such a problem paying our back debt was the raid by the Giuliani squad which effectively put an end to dancing at the club. (See groovy sidebar tidbit numero uno!) They said we had to have a cabaret license to allow dancing and since the building was zoned residential there was no way this was going to be allowed to happen. So, a rock and roll club with no dancing, that's going to discourage attendance which, means less money coming in.

BRUT: Well, how does the cabaret license thing work in New York City?

KITTY: Basically, and there is going to be a documentary made about this, or rather it's being made, was that back in the days of prohibition when all the jazz clubs were hopping, a law was developed as a way of controlling these venues. It was a way to actually legislate against the jazz clubs and speak-easys. We wouldn't want large groups of people dancing and having fun especially if their skin was dark. In any case, the law wasn't enforced since the Prohibition but Giuliani decided he was going to do something about the nightlife in New York City since he viewed nightlife here as a real problem. So he dragged the law off the books and we had Hogs and Heifers closed first for about two weeks because first Melanie Griffith was dancing there and then Julia Roberts and that opened the floodgates. A lot of places were closed especially gay bars and then after the Mayor caught a lot of flack he said, Oh, I did it because of the Happyland social club fire. Remember that, that was when the

disgruntled lover set fire to this small place and eighty-some people died. What the cabaret act has to do with that, well, it was just a ruse. That happened ten years ago, Mr. Mayor, if that's truly the case, why did you wait so long to enforce that law. Really, utterly nonsensical.

BRUT: So what's with the name, do you actually know who Killer Kowalski is?

KITTY: Oh yeah, I'm a big fan of his. Originally we were called The Killer Kowalskis and there was no problem with that until we released a couple of seven inch records. Then we got a cease-and-desist letter from him asking us to stop using his name. Turns out he runs a wrestling school in Massachusetts and he got the idea that we might be hurting his business. We got this really childish letter by way of his agent, so we changed the name but I framed the letter and gave a copy to Dick Manitoba who has it hanging in his bar with a picture of the Killer.

A little later an AM radio station had Killer Kowalski on and they found out about the band and wanted us to call in and do a tag team thing on him but he was having none of that.

BRUT: For a band employing the name of a famous wrestler there is nary a mention of grappling on the entire disc.



KRISTOPHER KOWALSKI ROCKS NOW!



BRUT: Sure, think of Frank Sinatra, Jr. Or Jobriath (see *groovy sidebar tidbit numero dos!*) if you want a more modern musical exemplar.

KITTY: Actually we were just doing a take-off on a typical publicity release. We found that we were playing three clubs calling themselves lounges on this abbreviated tour and so we thought it would be a fun gag to call this the lounge tour. It's going quite well, people are throwing their underwear on-stage like they do for Tom Jones . . .

BRUT: So many of your songs are about breaking-up and heartbreak, failed romance, we thought that you are the one who could offer cogent dating tips to our audience.

KITTY: Funny, I once asked The Lunachicks the same question and they immediately said, Fresh breath. It's funny and up to that point, I'd never thought of that but no matter how hot a guy may be if he's got bad breath, well, you can't make out with him. Beer, whiskey and cigarettes is all fair game but just overall skankyness cannot be something going on in your mouth. It also helps to have a big dick.

BRUT: We'll sidebar that if you don't mind.

KITTY: True, but we do have a bunch of women in their underwear wrestling on the front of the album. Something I enjoy doing in my apartment.

BRUT: We hear apartment wrestling has reached an unprecedented level of popularity in Sweden.

KITTY: Yes, that and outrageous drug intake.

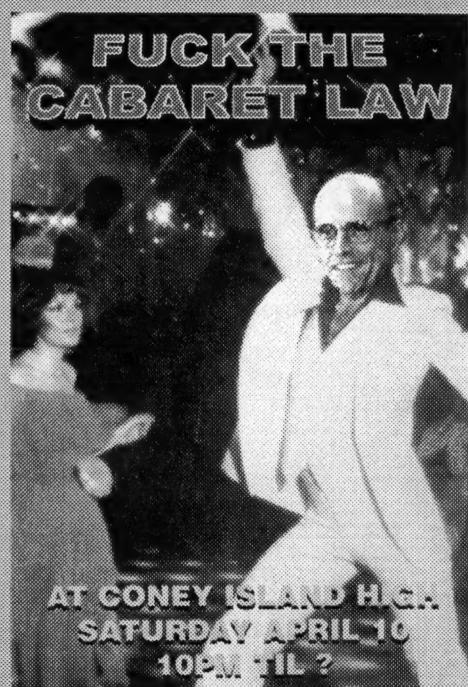
BRUT: You're calling this tour a lounge tour, why would an up and coming act like The Kowalskis do that? When the public thinks of lounge acts they think of washed-up Vegas singers plying their trade at hotel airports?

KITTY: So what are you trying to say. C'mon spit it out. Anyway, can you be washed-up before you've even gotten going?

KITTY: No, no, that's okay, smallness in that area is not a good thing. Funny thing about big units, geeky guys always seem to have them. I had a geeky boyfriend in high school for that very reason. They're also the biggest perverts and it's because they read a lot of porn and just study it. The way med students study anatomy in med school.

BRUT: Speaking of big dicks, you played one of your first gigs with Iggy. How did that come about? He thought you were real cute, right?

KITTY: Actually, it was our very first gig and no it wasn't because he thought I was cute; I don't even know if he knew who we were. We love Iggy so the following comes with a caveat: this has nothing to do with Iggy . . . The manager saw that the band that was to open for Iggy was too popular and wanting to make sure that Mr. Pop drew



GROOVY SIDEBAR TIDBIT

NUMERO UNO: Evil fascist Rudolph "Benito" Giuliani is the Constitution crushing scumbag Mayor of New York City who is currently trying to spread his cancerous personal agenda to the United States senate.

-FUN FACT FOR KIDZI

After undercover New York City cops shot and killed an unarmed black man who rebuffed their inquiries to "where they could score some pot", Der Fuhrer Rudy illegally released the victim's sealed juvenile record in an attempt to smear the dead man and branded him on TV as "no alterboy" as an excuse for the execution! Wow! What a wacky guy!

GROOVY SIDEBAR TIDBIT NUMERO DOS:

Nutty Jobriath Boone was an over-hyped failed Glam Rock act in the early '70's who gained what little



limelight he had by telling reporters he was a "true fairy" and appearing nearly nude on a Times Square billboard. He is currently non-existent.

-FUN FACT FOR KIDZI

Elektra Records paid an unheard of five hundred thousand freakin' dollars to sign this goddamn moron! Ouch!



SUPERNATURAL KOWALSKI
IS A LEFTY!

IT ALSO HELPS TO HAVE A BIG DICK.

- Kitty Kowalski

all the light, he bounced that band and took us on. Looking for the biggest losers he could find . . .

BRUT: Oh, c mon!

KITTY: No, seriously, the opening act s stage show was a little bit too flamboyant and might upstage Iggy so we were called in.

BRUT: No one reads us, c mon fess up, who was it.

KITTY: Oh! I don t know . . .

BRUT: C mon, c mon, c mon, to quote Iggy . . .

KITTY: All right, twist my arm, it was Psychotica.

BRUT: But they SUCK!

KITTY: I wouldn t say that. You can. But they are flamboyant. Hey, it s Larry!

BRUT: Yes, it s local eccentric, Leaping Larry Legend, and, if truth be known, an appearance by him is virtually synonymous in the greater D.C.-Baltimore area with a media imprimatur of hip.

KITTY: That s pretty good for an off-the-cuff remark. You should have gone into radio. Look, he s got a Kowalskis T-shirt and everything. But he s not wearing the cape. The last time we were here he had a cape on and a Batman hat. We have a fan like that in New York. We start playing, he heads to the bathroom and when he comes out he s dancing and wearing nothing except his underwear.

BRUT: So you inspire people. Can you talk about punk continuing to inspire music fans, especially teenagers?

KITTY: Well, in so many cases, it s about good songs. Catchy little numbers. Same as it ever was: punk totally bashed the whole notion of having to have guitar lessons and

expensive equipment and voice lessons and more recently, expensive computers to make arresting music. That D.I.Y. aesthetic possesses real appeal. Continued appeal. Three chords with a great melody is timeless.

BRUT: Interesting you d say this coming from hardcore which often eschews melody.

KITTY: Well, chew on this, like punk, hardcore was something anybody could do. Whether they did it well is another story but with hardcore it was even easier than punk because you didn t have to be able to sing. Although today s hardcore is mutating more from metal than punk. Originally hardcore was evolving from punk; it was song based. It was sped up and more energetic but there was still some semblance of melody.

BRUT: In the 80s it started to change though . . .

KITTY: Yes, it did; when the crossover thing happened between metal and hardcore it just kept spiraling and now, today, hardcore bands have half as much to do with metal as they do with punk. Still, I can remember a transitional period when hardcore and speed metal were doing the same thing at the same time in the mid-80s. They hated each other and I remember thinking, Why are they killing each other? The only difference is the length of their hair and the length of their guitar solos. **-B**

DISCOGRAPHY-

- Scene: Made in New York** (Comp) June 96
Get Smart Records
- FIRST DATE/GOODBYE DADDY** (45) Oct 96
Blackout Records
- Go On Girl Class of 1997** (Comp) Feb 97
100% Fret Free
- Best of the Best** (Comp) Sept 97
Awesome Dawson
- Proud to Be Blonde (Blondie Tribute)** June 98
V & V Records
- New York Finest II** (Comp) Fall 98
Kado Records
- Backlash: Tribute to The Clash** Aug 99
Dwell/CMH
- My So Called Punk Rock Life** (Comp) Oct 99
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- ALL HOPPED UP ON GOOFBALLS** (CD)
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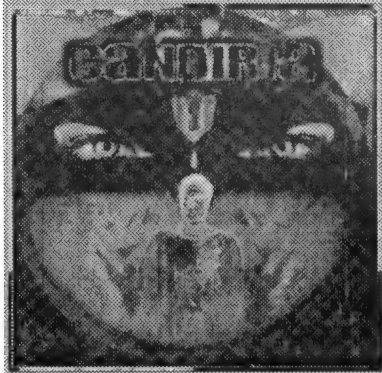


Indecision-release the cure

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OUT WELL AND THERE IS JUST AN AURA
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FROM ANY OTHER IN THE HARDCORE SCENE...EERIE,
TIGHT, EVIL AND THOUGHT PROVOKING
ALL IN ONE." - In effect #12

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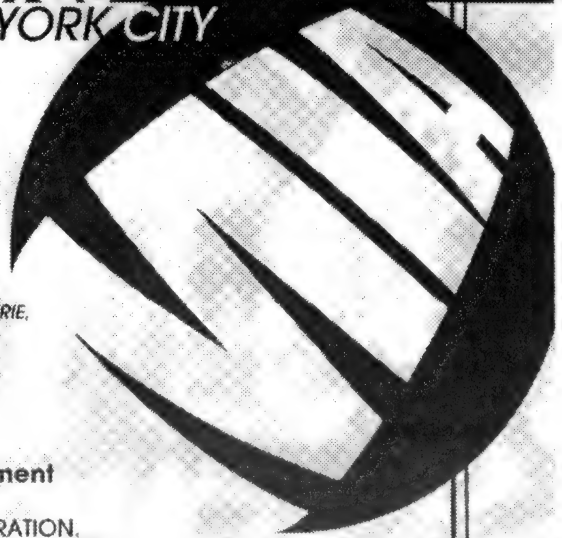


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that is lean and taught
where the guitar is
the voice and the riff
is the reason



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CORE

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blue cheer with
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a blissful psychedelic
journey into the new
breed of acid rock.



RED GIANT

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experimentation and a
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The editors here at *Brutarian* are relentless in their search for groovy rock and roll bands from remote areas. We've given up hope of finding any combos from Wyoming or Montana and we'd just about thrown in the towel with regard to New Mexico when what should show up in our mailbox but a disc by this delectable looking trio calling themselves The Eyeliners. Aside from being easy on the eyes, the group is also easy on the ears. Infectious even, thanks to their adroit mix of faux-bratty sexuality and insouciant tunefulness. Like so many zines, we could ask you to think this or think that when it comes to their sound but let's just call it melodic punk played with refreshing naiveté.

In talking to The Eyeliners we tried to get them to drop their guard and speak as individuals but they were having none of it. Charming they were but undaunted and united they stood; thus, their responses are herein presented and represented by the identifier: The Girls. Nothing sexist meant by the moniker, it's bestowed as a compliment; some of our best friends are girls.



GIRLY ROCK NOT DEAD

Disco Dom Salemi
interviews....

THE



BRUTARIAN: So let's start by having you all introducing yourselves and telling your fans one or two things about each of you that they need to know.

THE GIRLS: I'm Gel, guitar and backing vocals and I'll have to get back to you on what the fans need to know about me.

BRUT: What about Laura and Lisa?

THE GIRLS: We're thinking. We're thinking . . . Okay, okay, although there's a lot of work involved, we really love touring. Meeting new fans every night, getting positive responses to our music. It's a new and interesting experience every time out. We're big B-movie

fans which you probably guessed after hearing "Do The Zombie." We get a big kick out of trash.

BRUT: Speaking of trashy, you realize, of course, that we're missing Wrestlemania just to talk to you. And we've never missed a Wrestlemania. We were there at the first Wrestlemania when it was only available on closed circuit tv. We flew all the way out to

EYELiNERS

Indianapolis to see Ric Flair square off against The Hulkster in Wrestlemania 6 or 7 or 18 or whatever number it was. We . . .

THE GIRLS: . . .are in a mania about Wrestlemania . . .

BRUT: So tell us how you've arranged your lives to do all this touring with which you are so enamored.

THE GIRLS: We've taken jobs at hotels, one of us works in a cafe, another as a bartender . . . and it allows us to always have a place to stay when we go out on the road no matter the town. And we get unbelievable rates - \$25 a night for the three of us. It makes the whole process so much less nerve-wracking knowing ahead of time you have a nice, comfortable place to sleep after a show in an unfamiliar city. If you're not going to have a job paying a million dollars while you're working at the rock game you should try to get one with decent benefits.

BRUT: It's surprising more struggling bands don't seek part time jobs in the hotel industry.

THE GIRLS: It beats working in a convenience store, that's for sure. Far less dangerous too.

BRUT: Most people don't associate rock and roll and general craziness with New Mexico. Do you have trouble finding places to play in your native state? Is there any kind of scene out there?

THE GIRLS: Albuquerque and Santa Fe and that's about it. Even then there's only one club

in each city. The scene's starting to build, more bands are forming all the time but with one club in a town it's hard to gain a following. You're not going to get all-age shows, the club can pick and choose . . .

BRUT: And so it may be a while before you get invited back.

THE GIRLS: Exactly, and how does the word get out about you if you're not playing constantly in your own town. The Drags on Estrus (Estrus Records) are from here and they made it in a sense but that's an exception.

BRUT: So what would you gals do to make it? Or let's make this more interesting, what wouldn't you do, to become fabulously successful?

THE GIRLS: Well we wouldn't compromise when it comes to songwriting. We feel pretty strongly about composing songs that we like, not somebody else's idea about what we should be doing or singing about . . . We wouldn't run around naked in a video . . .

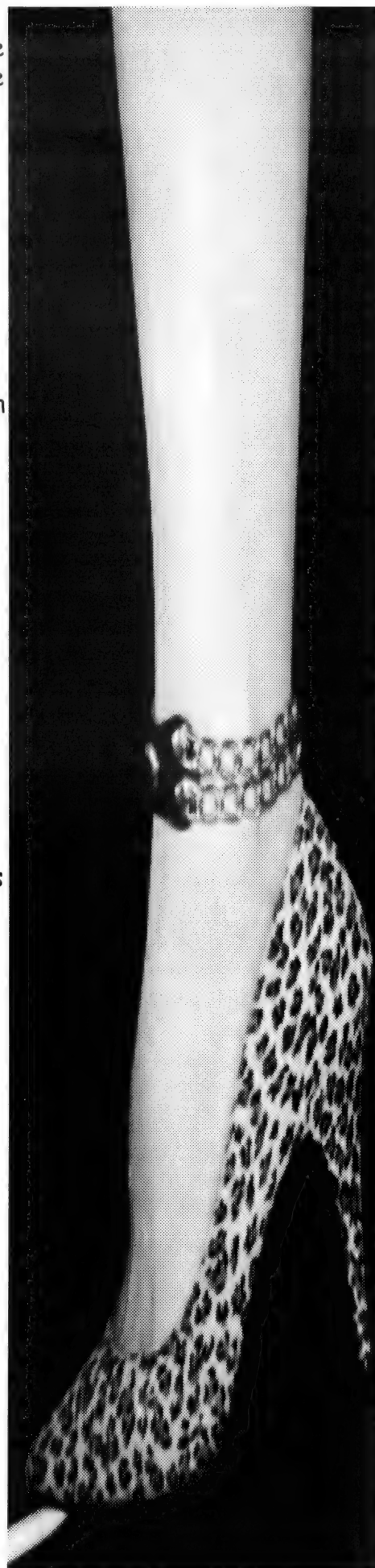
BRUT: No matter how much money is thrown your way?

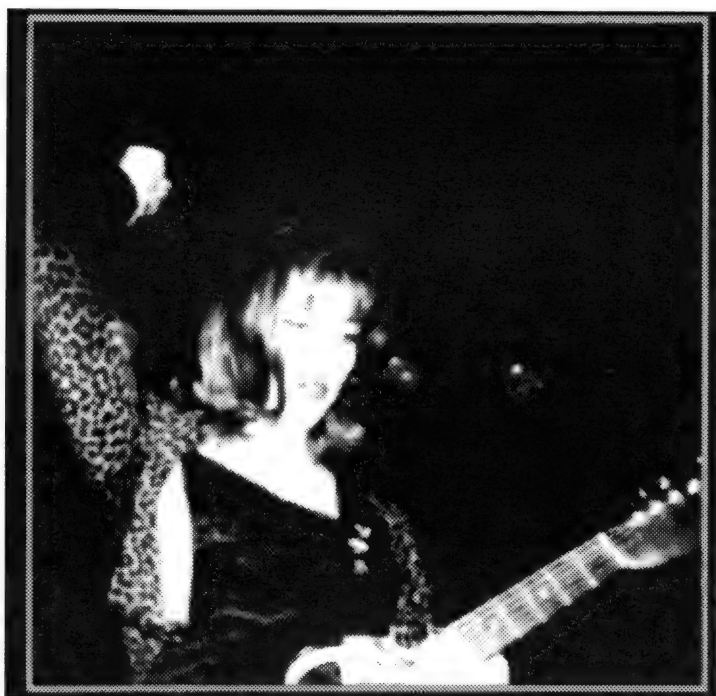
THE GIRLS: No, no, it's just not the way we want to go.

BRUT: Interesting as it seems, at least if you believe zines like *Flipside* and *Maximum R n R*, that female and punk and nudity are one.

THE GIRLS: Really? We'll have to take a closer look at those publications.

BRUT: You'll also find that





almost all the gals in the bands featured in those mags are rather attractive while the guys are loathsome at best.

THE GIRLS: Well, that's not true. There are a lot of cute boys, good looking guys in punk bands.

BRUT: Name one!

THE GIRLS: Uh, we'll have to get back to you on that!

BRUT: And while we're on the subject of looks, you gals have managed to keep yourself looking fresh as a daisy despite being degenerate punks. Give us your beauty secrets.

THE GIRLS: Eyeliner. Lots of eyeliner.

BRUT: Hence, the name . . .

THE GIRLS: That and the fact that we think it has both a



punk and a 60s girl group feel to it which is what we're about . . .

BRUT: Is beauty a great burden?

THE GIRLS: Forget beauty, it's hard just being a girl. Especially in the punk scene. It's hard to get taken seriously. Just getting started in Albuquerque was incredibly

difficult. We really had to prove ourselves, had to work real hard. We were the first all gal punk band, in fact, there weren't any girls in bands here. Generally, our experience has been that people see a girl band and they think you're going to just plink away at your instruments, that you're not very talented. Criticism is generated that normally doesn't get directed at male bands, it's frustrating.

BRUT: Well, you don't sound frustrated, whereas a lot of the songs find you rather annoyed with people and people's attitudes.

THE GIRLS: The music and the stage is the outlet for our anger, we like to think that we're rather nice and easy going. And certainly approachable if you'd care to approach us.

-B

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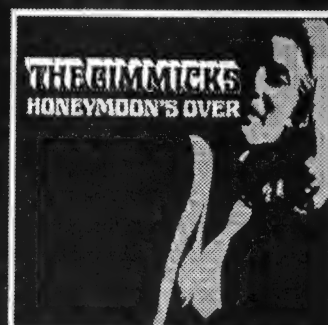
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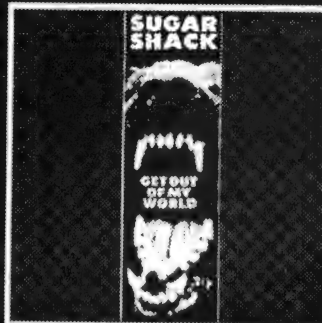
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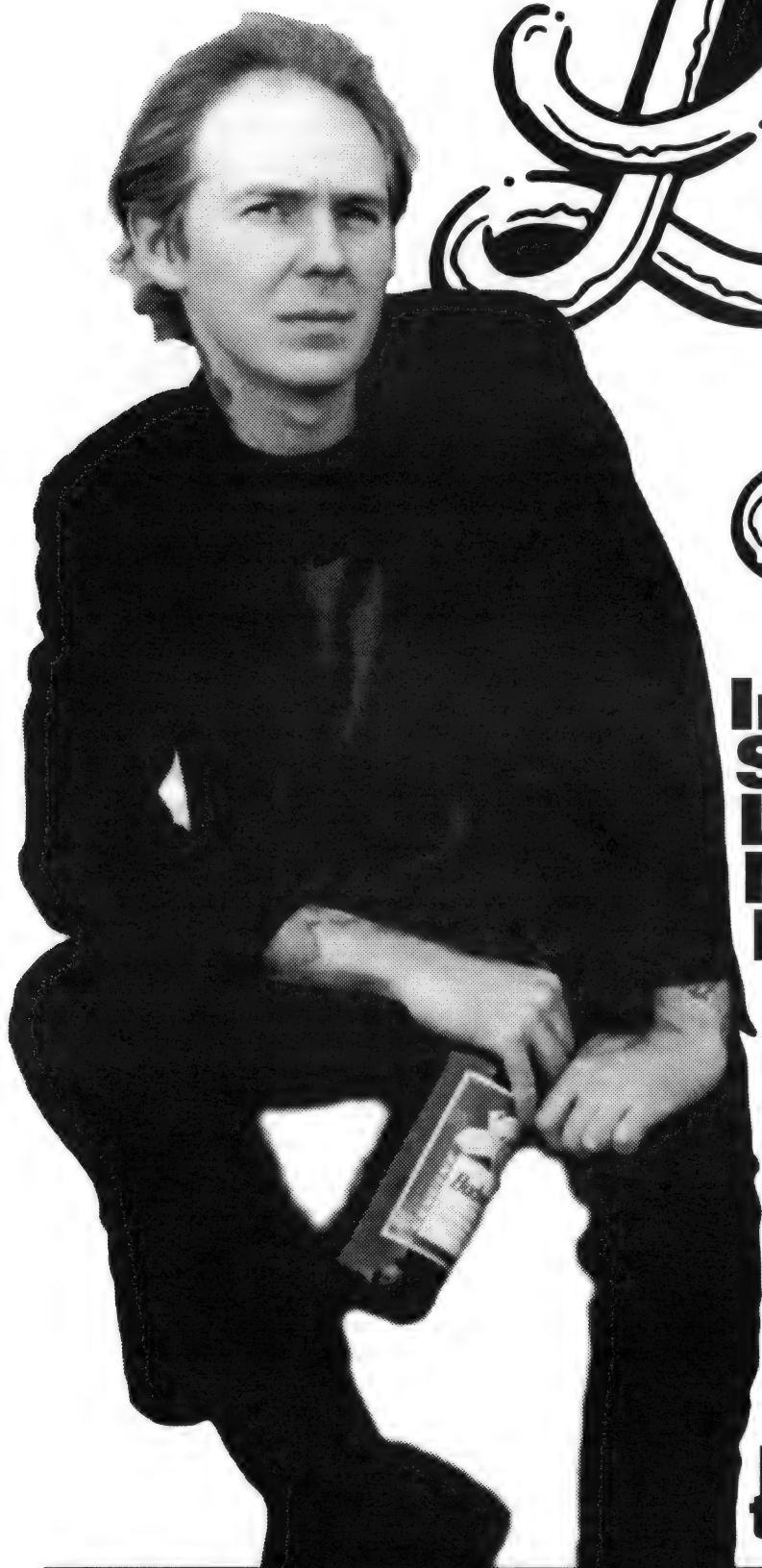
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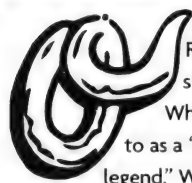
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Loose Lips

**Interview with
Shane White of
Loose Lips (also of
Maximum Rock &
Roll fame, as well as
formerly of The
Fingers, Lab Rats,
Rip-Offs, Spoiled
Brats, Tight Fits,
Infections, and
about a dozen
other LA and San
Francisco-based
punk bands over
the past 20 years)**





On the Rip Off Records web site, Shane White is referred to as a "San Francisco legend." While he himself

might dispute (or at least laugh at) this title, Shane has been a visible presence on the SF punk rock scene for close to 10 years now, through his various bands, records, record reviews in Maximum Rock & Roll

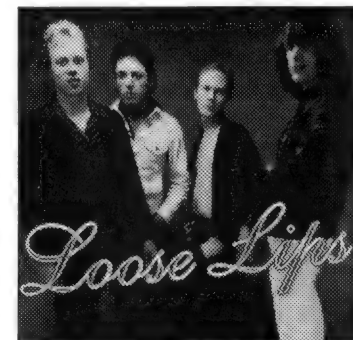
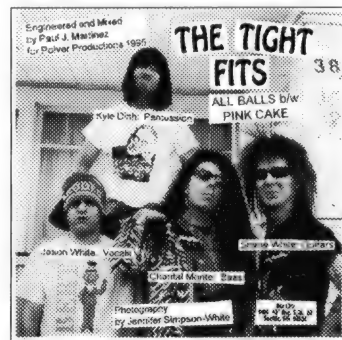
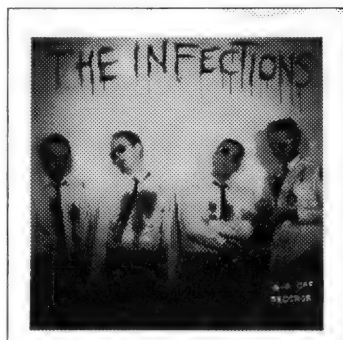
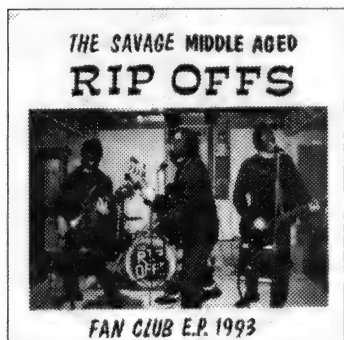
leave, resulting in the formation of Loose Lips.

A bit of background - Shane's first SF band to record (and, as we found out in the interview, the first band in which he played guitar) was The Fingers, made up of Shane, his brother Jason on drums and vocals, and one Ralph Barcarel on bass. They recorded 4 or 5 singles, most notably a cover of The Boy's "First Time" (which, is performed live by Loose

again!) next formed The Infections, a band that seemed to step up the intensity, music-wise, even higher. The Infections' one full-length release, "Kill...," depicted Shane in a hospital bed on the cover surrounded by the rest of the band. 500 or so vinyl copies of the LP came with posters that were allegedly splattered with the band members' real blood. The B-Side of their only single, "Sign of a Good Time" (A-Side

hanging out and making mischief in this delightful neighborhood...it's drunkard/junkie rock & roll at its best. The night we called Shane, he was in the throes of recovering from the flu, and he was in a gabby mood, caused, no doubt, by his smoking pot throughout the interview.

A little bit about the band history, please. I've got all of your recorded stuff from The Rip Offs, Spoiled Brats, the couple of 45's from the



(MRR), and his Pure Filth record label and magazine. His bands have put out somewhere in the neighborhood of 20 singles and 3 incredibly great albums (in my opinion, at least - The Rip-Offs' "Got A Record" [Rip Off Records], The Infections' "Kill..." [Rip Off], and his latest, The Loose Lips' "Talkin' Trash" [TKO Records]. Just his participation on these three albums would put him fairly high on the list of musicians I'd like to interview...not to mention his insanely funny, politically incorrect MRR record reviews, with their graphic, tongue-in-cheek (and elsewhere) references to all sorts of gay sex.(as in "this is a great record to put on and listen to while fucking your boyfriend in the ass!!!!") Nonetheless, I approached this interview with just a bit of trepidation, having heard that Shane and his former partner in crime, Greg Lowery (bassist/vocalist with the Rip-offs, Lab Rats, and Infections with Shane, as well as owner of Rip Off Records) were on the outs, to say the least. I'd also heard that Mr. Lowery was probably the more pissed-off of the two, as he had apparently been kicked out of the Infections, or asked to

Lips). Out of The Fingers (White brothers), Supercharger (Greg Lowery, bass/vocals), and The Mr. T. Experience (Jon Von Zelowitz, guitar/vocals), The Rip-Offs were born, along with several other side-project bands (including two bands that Shane played in - The Spoiled Brats, fronted by his then-girlfriend Elka Zolot [watch for her name later!], and The Lab Rats [Shane, Greg Lowery, and Tim of The Makers]. The Rip-Offs were a band that, after their first single, never showed their faces in photos, performing and posing in face masks. They were also known for being confrontational with their audiences, to say the least, and released a classic punk album with all 14 songs apparently written in the same key, as well as 5 or so now impossible-to-find singles. All of their records were (and still are) great, insanely intense chaotic punk rock of the highest order. As in the case of, so far, all of Shane's bands, they never made it as far as two full-length LP's. He and Lowery, along with drummer Wes Gravolet and Spastics guitarist/singer Justin Schenberg (The Spastics were fronted by Elka Zolot - there's that name

was "Kill For You"), was David Johansen's "I'm A Lover" with different lyrics (with no credit to Johansen). Again, they lasted only a short time - another great band bites the dust. The Infections, sans Lowery, enlisted another bass player, Greg Fenwick, to form Loose Lips, while Lowery's next project was The Zodiac Killers, a band whose first full-length LP was all of about 12-13 minutes long (and 12-13 songs, for that matter), and consisted of almost hardcore, speed freak, stun-gun punk. Loose Lips' full-length release, "Talkin' Trash," on TKO Records (NOTE: When you fire your bass player who owns the label you record on, I guess you wind up on another label...), slowed things down just a bit, delving more into the old-school trash punk roots of Thunders/The Dolls/Real Kids/Hollywood Brats, while sacrificing no intensity at all. The music is a reflection of the LP/CD cover, showing a rather menacing snaggle-toothed hooker from the Tenderloin district in SF, glaring into the camera. Shane mentions later in the interview that the lyrics of many of these songs were inspired by their days

Tight Fits, the Infections, and now Loose Lips. Any other bands you've been in? February will be my 20th year of playing in bands. Since 1980, I've been in 21 bands! **Wow!** I'm from LA, and I just played in a bunch of little garage bands here and there...nothing to write home about...but I've been in 21 in all.

That's gotta be some kind of record. Originally I was a bass player, starting in 1980, and it was in 1990 that I switched over to guitar. The Fingers was the first band in which I played guitar. Any records from The Fingers? SW - A couple of 45's. **Let me get a quick question out of the way right at the start - what is your relationship now with Greg Lowery like? Are you guys on good terms, hate each other's guts, what?** SW - Am I on good terms or bad terms with Lowery? God, I'm glad I just took a hit of pot! **I ask because a friend of mine, who, I believe, you know, Alec (Budd) from The Problematics, saw one of your first shows back in '98, if I recall, and described you guys as The Infections, only without Lowery...and I wondered whether the rest of you maybe tossed him**

out, or was it a friendly split? At the time, his description of us made sense...because we played a lot of Infections' songs at our first show, which I think he saw. **Do you happen to know what Greg's doing nowadays? The day I bought his latest CD, The Zodiac Killers' debut, I heard that they had already broken up at that point.** I don't really know what's going on with his personal life. I do know he has a hard time keeping his bands together. The Zodiac Killers broke up right before the record came out, then got back together again with 2 new guitar players, and now, apparently, one of the new guitarists has left. It seems to be in constant change...but really, I don't know what's going on with Lowery, I don't talk to him. I've talked to him about once since The Infections broke up. I don't really keep in touch with him that much. **When The Infections broke up it seems to me that you broke off on two distinct tangents...Lowery seemed to go off on a speed freak, faster and shorter songs, perhaps more hardcore approach, and you guys in Loose Lips kinda went more toward an old school punk approach, more Thunders, Hollywood Brats, Stones-ish sort of sound.** Yeah, the problem with Greg was the fact that, basically, nobody likes to play music that fast...I mean it's not really that fun to play. And he was kind of pressuring us to play faster and faster and faster all the time, and we were just resisting and resisting, and it was getting ridiculous! **Why isn't it fun to play fast?** Let's put it this way, in the 21 bands I've been in — I was around when it was in vogue to play fast...around '80, '82 — bands like...you guys are from DC, right? I remember when that whole wave hit — Minor Threat, Government Issue, Youth Brigade, Void, all those DC bands — they were all really big in LA in 1982. That's when all that stuff was breaking. Everybody wanted to play like Minor Threat, because nobody had ever heard anything like it before. In LA we went through a post-punk era

in 1980-1982, with bands like Gun Club, and stuff that like, bands that were moody, heavy, more influenced by old rock & roll in their sound. Then all of a sudden, Minor Threat came along and changed everything. Suddenly, everyone's playing in these really hardcore bands. Actually, there were a couple of bands I was in at the time — I was playing bass, and it was really fast, thrash-o-matic type of stuff we were doing. When you're



13 or 14 years old, it's a lot of fun playing like that, 'cause you really don't know how to play very well, but it doesn't matter. You just want to go up there and thrash about. But everybody who's played hardcore music at one time seems to have evolved into doing something else naturally — and it even happened with Minor Threat. I think it's because you learn more about your instrument, and you're gonna want to start doing something other than [Shane imitates jackhammer guitar riffing]...you know what I mean? It gets boring after awhile. And the older you get, the more boring it gets. You know, I was doing that shit two generations ago! When you're hammering out 3 bar chords at lightning speed over and over and over, you could basically be playing anything, that could be anything coming out of your amplifier up there! You could be screwing up, fumbling around — the audience is all drunk anyway, and doesn't care! **That reminds me of the last years of The**

Ramones live, at the point where they really hated each other. Some nights, I'm not sure what the Hell they were playing! The Ramones were just doing a job at that point, just going through the motions...and people were paying what? \$30 to see that! **Let me ask you a question or two about The Rip-Offs. Were those ski masks or wrestling masks you were wearing?** Neither! They were just nylon hose...kinda like the

old-time bank robbers back in the 70's wore. You could see through it, but it would distort your face. **Those couldn't have been as uncomfortable on stage as ski masks, I'm guessing.** Well, when you're up there on stage sweating like a pig, you'd die in a ski mask! I had to cut some holes in my nylon, to let some air in. **Once I referred to The Rip-Offs' "Got A Record" LP as the greatest album of all-time by a masked band where all the songs are in the same key. (ED. NOTE: This is not unlike that Boston newspaper writer who referred to Bobcat Goldthwaite's film "Shakes The Clown" as "the Citizen Kane of alcoholic clown movies.")** Yeah, I believe that's pretty close... **Was that due more to the band's playing or singing limitations?** Well...everybody had to have everything pretty much in the same key because nobody could really sing. There were 4 lead singers in The Rip-Offs, although I really didn't do much singing in that band because I was playing lead guitar. I did mostly

backup vocals...but my brother (drummer Jason), Jon Von and Greg shared most of the lead vocals. **That must be the reason I thought that Greg's singing had improved since (his previous band) Supercharger...a lot of it in The Rip-Offs wasn't him!** Yeah, Greg did practically all the vocals in Supercharger. Their guitar player Derek was really stage-shy. **On a side note...how long has Loose Lips been together?** About 2 years. So far, we have the one 45 ("Two Time Loser" A-side) and the full-length. **The press kit doesn't tell us much about the band. Here's a generic question: What's the one thing that people don't know about you or the band that they should? Something you think you need to clarify or wish that people did know about you?** I'll give you something. I've been reading a lot of reviews where people are saying that the Loose Lips just kinda went all wussy and all pretty boy, while Lowery continues to carry the punk rock torch. That's wrong. We sure as Hell didn't go "pretty boy." If you saw us in person, you'd see how fucking ugly we are! I mean — you've seen the pictures of us on that CD? **Yeah** I mean, come on man, look at our fucking faces! Wes and Greg gotta wear sunglasses, they're so ugly! **Speaking of faces, where did you find that nasty looking hooker for the album cover?** That hooker? We found her in the Tenderloin... **Is that the significance of the 900 Geary Street sign on the CD itself?** (ED. NOTE: Geary Street in SF's Tenderloin district is one of the worst (or best, depending on your viewpoint), trashiest neighborhoods, specializing in sleazy bars, bookstores with peepshows and porno video arcades, along with hookers and hustlers of generally hard-to-distinguish gender and/or number of teeth!) That was by coincidence, but yes, that is the significance of it. We didn't know what to do for a cover, so TKO hired a photographer for us, and we got drunk and went down to the Tenderloin.

This whore came up and said "Hey, I'll suck you guys' dicks." And we said, "Tell you what - for \$25, can we take some pictures of you?"...and that was it - so she wound up on the cover. But anyway, that was kind of coincidental, because Geary Street was in the background. But a lot of the songs on the album are about the Tenderloin, because Wesley the

who took all of the Rip-Offs' single and LP cover photos, we strongly suspect Shane is NOT Gay.) No, to be honest...Tim Yohannon, God bless his soul, is the only reason I do the reviews for MRR. He asked me to do reviews one time in a record store. He came up to me, I was holding a Them record...I think it was the first Them LP...and he asked me - "Hey, do

Tim, I really do. A lot of people cut him down, but he really knew his shit, and I think he was pretty important in this town. **We miss him, too. He used to do the "Queen of the Scene" comic strip for us.** Nobody at MRR now gives me any shit about my reviews. Now I do get letters occasionally from readers complain-

ing... **I've seen the letters there off and on, bitching about your reviews...apparently thinking you're serious!** There'll be letters and personal attacks, people threatening to kill me...but they'll just have to get in line! **It seems like MRR is also losing a lot of their best writers...they all seem to wind up in Hit List...** Yeah, it does seem that way. I'm not really sure, though, because I don't ever read the magazine [MRR]! I just go over there once a month to review 4 or 5 records. That's pretty much my involvement with MRR. Whenever I try to read it, I just get irritated...too many views bouncing back and forth, it's just too much for my brain! **A question or two about The Infections, if you don't mind...The**

first 45 you guys put out...did you write the B-Side, "Sign of a Good Time"? With

The Infections? Yeah, that's my tune. **Did David Johansen or Buster Poindexter or whatever the fuck he's calling himself nowadays ever sue you over that?** I believe we lifted a riff from somewhere... **"Lifted a riff"?** Hell, it's Johansen's "I'm A Lover" with different lyrics!

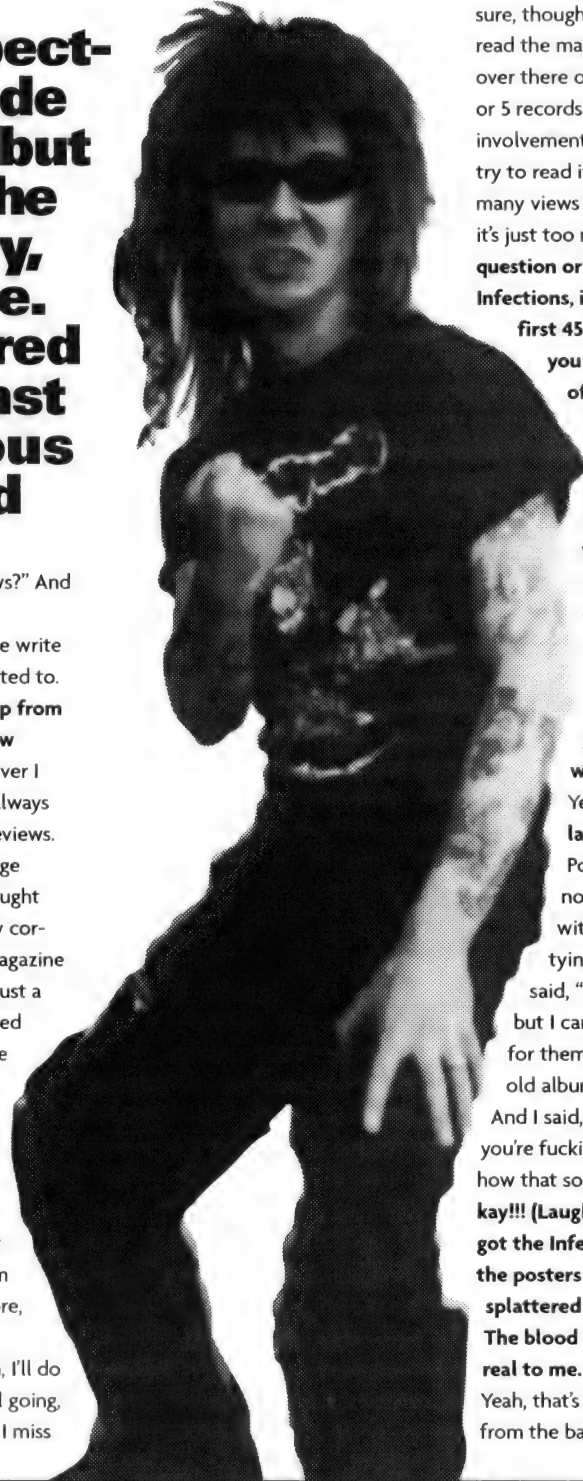
Yeah, pretty much. **So no lawsuit or threats?** Nah, Poindexter's with me right now over here, partying with me. Actually, I was partying with him one night and said, "I've got some lyrics here, but I can't fuckin' find a rhythm for them"...and he pulled out an old album and said, "Use this."

And I said, "Buster, that's perfect, you're fucking brilliant!" So that's how that song came about! **Ooo-kay!!! (Laughs) Another question. I got the Infections' LP with one of the posters that supposedly was splattered with the band's blood. The blood looks pretty fucking real to me. Whassup with that?** Yeah, that's real blood, and it's really from the band. What happened -

...people show up expecting some kind of attitude or cockiness from us, but we don't interact with the audience ... we just play, then walk off the stage. A lot of people get bored with that. They want fast stuff, with an obnoxious singer jumping around

drummer used to live there. We used to hang out and party and get fucked up there, and we used to watch all the whores down there on Geary Street all the time, all night long. They had these high class whores down there. A good portion of the songs are about those days from living in the middle of the Tenderloin, which is kind of like the dregs of downtown. But it was fun - it's kinda fucked up now there, with all those yuppies living there now. Anyway, that's how that worked with the cover. **Since sex is on our minds, a question or two about your record reviews in Maximum Rock & Roll (MRR). Always a treat for me to read your reviews with the hundreds of exclamation marks throughout, along with the explicit references to all sorts of gay sex. Do you catch any shit for them from MRR? (ED. NOTE: As Shane and Elka from the Spoiled Brats/Trashwomen/Spastics were an item at one point, and he was later married to Jennifer Simpson,**

you want to do fuckin' reviews?" And I said, "Yeah," and he said "Great!"...and he always let me write any damn thing I fucking wanted to. **So you never caught any crap from the political correctness crew there?** Nah, I could do whatever I wanted to...Tim and I would always have a good laugh over my reviews. But that was one of the strange things about Tim...I never thought about him as being politically correct at all, even though his magazine was. He always struck me as just a rock & roll kind of guy...he liked young girls, he smoked, he ate really heavy Italian meals all the time...all these things eventually killed him. We talked about rock & roll all the time. Now he's gone, it's kind of depressing going over there. I keep telling myself I'm not gonna do this shit anymore, cause I hate doing record reviews...but then I think "nah, I'll do it for Tim." His magazine's still going, so I'm still doing the reviews. I miss



originally we were gonna put blood in the ink, just like in the KISS comic...but the printing shop wouldn't have anything to do with it...they said, "Fuck that. Not these days, with AIDS and all." So Lowery went to Plan B. We'll have blood splattered all over our posters. The print shop still told us they wouldn't touch it. So Lowery - I don't know how in the Hell he did it....he found this chick who lives down on 16th Street, she was a nurse. We went up there one night, and had her draw vials of blood from all of us. I wanted to go first to get it over with, but I had to take a piss, and, as I was coming back, Justin had jumped the gun...and he says to me "Sorry - you're going last". Well, the chick was so nervous, she screwed it up putting the needle in his arm, and he wound up getting this big welt on his arm! But she sucked blood out of all four of us, and we just diluted it with a little water, unrolled all the posters, stuck toothbrushes in the blood, and had a party! **It was a limited edition poster, the bloody ones, if I recall.** Yeah... **And John's dying now, so thanks a lot! (Laughs)...** **Back to Loose Lips - The other band members - who was in the Spastics?** Justin was in The Spastics. He's our rhythm guitar player. **What's your brother (Jason) doing nowadays, music-wise?** (ED. NOTE: Shane's brother Jason was the drummer in The Rip-Offs and Tight Fits.) Not much. He works where I do. He's not in a band or anything like that at this point. **You work at Revelation Records, correct?** Revolver. **Question - With all of the music that's available via downloading from the Internet and music that can be accessed and bought via web sites, are we possibly looking at the end of independent record labels?...or do you think they will still be viable in the future?** Eh...Man, that went right over my goddamn head! **He's been smoking pot, remember? Do you think it's possible in this technological age for the independent record compa-**

ny or label to still make money? I don't see why they wouldn't! Why not? **'Cause it seems like everybody's downloading music on their computers...** Hey, I don't know anything about computers. I don't own a computer! I work with a UPS computer at work at the end of the day,



dealing with invoicing. I don't really know what's happening in terms of computer trends. As far as working in the warehouse, I still see tons of independent labels and product, and they seem to be growing like fucking parasites. I don't see any danger at all as far as indy companies becoming extinct. **The last time I was in SF, I saw first-hand another new indy label growing. The Howling Bull emporium on Valencia St., which is a combination punk record store/wrestling memorabilia shop, is home to the Japanese Howling Bull label. They've already got quite a few artists on their roster, and the sampler they gave me was pretty good.** I've heard about it. One of the guys at Revolver just went to get a job there. I've never been there, and I didn't know they were a label. **It's also a cool little punk record store...which brings me to...I usually**

get to SF at least once a year on business or vacation. Is it just me, or have most of the better small record stores been going out of business there the past several years? A very cool little place on the west end of Haight closed about 3 years ago. Neurotic, which

was the best punk record store in the city, on Folsom, South of Market, closed about the same time... It isn't just the record stores here. Clubs are also going out of business. It's a reflection of what's going on in SF in general. There just isn't much room for music here anymore. Everything's been turned over to computers. Jerk-offs from Silicon Valley are moving into the city, driving rents sky high. There's no room for musicians to live here anymore. They can't afford the rents...so it's a domino effect. There's less need for record stores or clubs for live music when you can open a software store. Little by little, the music scene is shrinking. In the 90's it was vibrant. There were a lot of bands and tons of clubs. It was a fun place, with something happening every night. **That's true - I remember, the very first thing I'd usually do upon arriv-**

ing in SF was get a copy of the equivalent of our City Paper and look at the club listings. My God, the club listing now is about a third the size it was back in '92 or '93. **Another question - What's the one moment that really stands out about being in this band, where you felt a sense of pride, a sense of accomplishment?** In Loose Lips? Yes I can think of several moments. When we changed bass players was one that sticks out. That was perfect, playing with a bass player who we had really wanted for some time, and getting to play the tunes that we wanted to. Another moment was when TKO came up to us and said that they wanted to do a single with us - things have been looking up since then. With this band, every time I turn around, it seems like something interesting is happening. I'm proud of this band. We're a bunch of fuck-ups, but I still dig the band. **Is it harder to keep a band together nowadays than in the past?** Yes, it's completely different now. Nothing is geared toward fun or having a good time anymore - and this is the reason many of us got into music in the first place. Even if you're in the lowest band of the lows, playing 3 chords in a garage, somebody's going to come up to you almost immediately and try to make some money off you. Whether it's a small label or a magazine, somebody's going to try to exploit you (ED. NOTE: BRUTARIAN excluded, of course!!!) or categorize you or put you in something. When I was younger, you could just play in a band, and never think about things like doing records - it was just something there was no point in reaching for...there were so few independent labels. You just played shows here and there when you got them or backyard parties, what have you, but these days - you throw a band together and it's immediately - next month, we put out a single; the next month, we tour Japan or Europe. Everybody's got a different idea. No one seems to be in it for the fun anymore. It's more of - "I want to put

together a business" than "I want to start a band." And this drives me nuts — I'm not used to all these business ends of it. Greg Lowery exposed me to the business end of it, and it scared the shit out of me! I've always been in music because I like music. I love music, and I know nothing else. There's nothing else I'd want to do. So Lowery came in - he wasn't a musician, but he knew how to man-

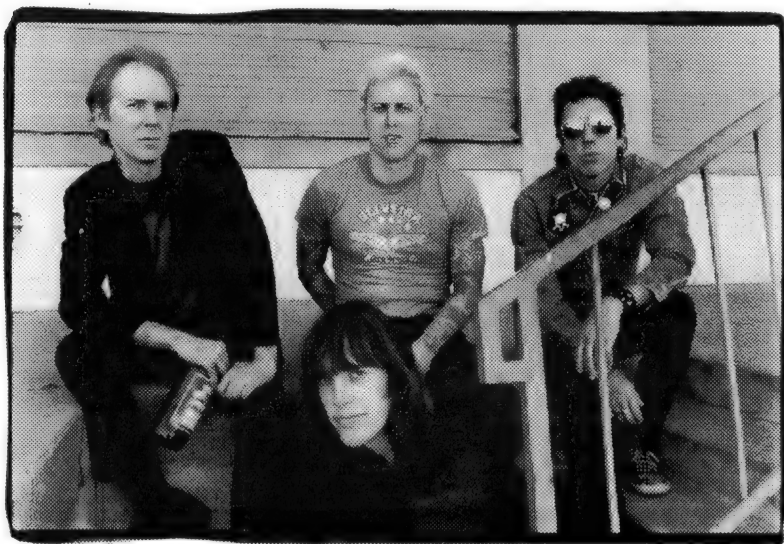
is originals. **I saw that one of the B-Sides of the "Two Time Loser" single was "Slow Death". I wondered whether that was the Roy Loney/Flamin' Groovies song, until I saw the writing credits.** Yeah, it seems like a lot of our song titles are names of other peoples' songs as well. **Yeah, I thought "Baby Talk" on the CD might be the Johnny Thunders/Heartbreakers tune.** It's

kind of a hard one to answer. **Well, your answer might just be San Francisco.** We don't really get particularly good responses wherever we go, to be quite honest. I remember playing a show up in Seattle that was pretty good. Portland was alright, too. We don't really put on any kind of stage show. We just walk out there, drink some beer, smoke some dope, and play. Sometimes people

want to see The Rip-Offs, but... **You get calls for Rip-Offs' songs?** Not really... sometimes, because we might be billed as "ex-members of The Rip-Offs", people show up expecting some kind of attitude or cockiness from us, but we don't interact with the audience - we don't even introduce ourselves - we just play, then walk off the stage. A lot of people get bored with that. They want fast stuff, with an obnoxious singer jump-

ing around. **Have you by any chance had the honor or privilege of playing on one of the Incredibly Strange Wrestling shows?** Yes, we have. We played on a very early show, for us, down in LA. I forgot who we played with. I think it was Johnny Legend's band, and...the Bobbyteens... **They usually book 4-5 bands, and mix the music up, between punk and rockabilly.** Yeah, there were a lot of bands playing there. I like the diversity of music in those shows. So many shows nowadays consist of bands that sound exactly the same. The way the ISW guys do it tends to make each band stand out more. I remember - The Go-Nuts were also there that night. They completely destroyed the place. Have you ever seen them? **No, I remember hearing part of one of their CD's, though.** They're into this snacking thing, that I don't want to go into...they're like members of The Phantom Surfers and Untamed Youth. They made a

whole mess of the place; it was a great show! Oh, here's some interesting information for you - we just got the OK to do that thing in Las Vegas in August. **Not Viva Las Vegas?** No, the Dictators and Real Kids are on the bill... **I can't remember what they're calling it...it's similar to the Cave Stomp shows in NYC.** Yeah, something along those lines...we'll be doing that show. That'll be interesting. A lotta people will be there. Anxiety time! **Didn't there used to be an annual festival of sorts that Rip-Off put on there in San Francisco? 8-10 bands per night for 2-3 nights?** Yeah, it was 3 nights. Mister Lowery was not the most original person in the world - he did his version of Garage Shock, which Dave Crider used to do in the early 90's up in Bellingham, Washington. They'd put on 3-day festivals of just garage bands and they were a pretty big success...so Lowery got the idea of doing something like this himself. It was a Friday/Sat/Sun thing. There would be 3 nights of bands and what have you. It was called the Rip-Off Rumble. **I have one more, another SF-related question. Shane - are you a fan of "Shut Up Little Man"?** What? **The tapes of those two beligerent drunks who lived on Steiner Street in the Haight, who spent all of their time fighting and yelling at each other.** I have heard about them, but I've never actually heard them. **Never mind! What was the name of your magazine again?** (Laughs) **BRUTARIAN. (JO) - You can buy it at Tower Records there in SF, as well as in that punk clothing store with the Latin name on Haight Street that has the tattoo and piercing parlor in the back.** Yeah, I think I know the place. **(At this point, we get his address to send him copies of the magazine.) This went really well, I think, and we'd like to thank you for talking with us.** I hope it went alright. I just got over the stomach flu and I've been smoking dope, so my thoughts may not be the clearest. **It'll turn out great!** Thanks, guys! **-B**



age things. He knew how to get various balls rolling. Once the ball started rolling, though, I ended up meeting a lot of people who I didn't particularly like...people who I didn't think had any business being in music at all...but they had the gift of gab, they knew how to bullshit, they knew how to get you booked into this club or that. Before I knew it, I was in this whole crowd of people who I didn't particularly like. They didn't really like me either, but they were using each other back and forth. **Question about Loose Lips and your live shows...On the CD you covered the Hollywood Brats' "Tumble With Me". Any other cover songs you do in your live sets?** Yeah, we do "Now" by the Plimsouls, and "You're The One" by The Boyfriends...they're an old NY band that had a single out on Bomp. Sometimes, if we're in the mood, we'll play "First Time" by The Boys. That's about it. Everything else we do

not like we put a Hell of a lot of thought into the titles themselves. After it's written, it's like "what'll we call it?" "Fuck it!" (Laughs) To elaborate a little more on one of your earlier questions about special moments. We just got off a tour with The Real Kids, who were one of my all-time favorite bands. It was really interesting playing with them and exchanging stories and listening to all their bullshit. **They're the original four Real Kids now, correct?** Yeah, it's the original four. There were two different eras there, and it was somewhat strange - they did a comparison, and told us - "you guys are basically us 20 years ago" It was definitely fun comparing interacting with them - another moment I was proud of. **What's the best city you guys have played in so far...as far as reaction or response to you?** We don't actually get out all that much. In this band, we never really left California until this Real Kids tour, so...that's



THAT'S TRAILER BRIDE....

BY DOM SALEMI

NOT TRAILER TRASH!



art by Chris Krolczyk

©CHRIS KRO. '00

You wanna talk alternative country? Let's talk alternative country. Heck, let's just talk alternative, as this North Carolina quartet puts out some of the strangest, most far out roots based music we've heard in a coon's age.

Now, don't go lookin' at us like we're city slicker arrivistes as concerns the scene, good folks at labels like Bloodshot, Rounder, etc., have been keeping us abreast of developments in the alt.-fields for a number of years so we're not exactly babes in the woods here. Freakwater, Handsome Family, Split Lip Rayfield: down home with all of them, yes siree. When Mr. Rhythm, Andre Williams went country, we were there. Trailer Bride's work, nevertheless, gave us a pleasant jolt, the first time we slapped it on the old disc player. The forms are recognizable - high lonesome hillbilly, bluegrass, Appalachian dance - but it's tweaked in clever ways: some bluesy slide here, a bit of discordant texture here, a little wayward psychedelica here. And when it's time to get downright weird, lead singer and guiding light, Melissa Swingle brings out bow and trusty saw. Weird too is Swingle's plaintive warble, a disquieting mix of tenderness and sardonicism. Rather touching in it's own haunting way though.

We caught up with the band at the back room of Washington, D.C.'s Black Cat one cold, blustery January night. The quartet was in relatively good spirits after a jaunty performance before a small but receptive audience; still, one couldn't help but feel that Trailer Bride would have been a wee bit more comfortable sipping Jack in front of a roaring fire. But then it was cold down in the basement of that concrete bunker.

Anyhoo, here are the principals aside from the aforementioned Ms. Swingle: Brad Goolsby - drums; Daryl White - stand-up bass; Scott Goolsby - lead guitar. Brad had some interesting things to say but he sat well back from the tape recorder and so his observations were lost in the ether.

BRUT: So, first an interview in *No Depression* magazine, now a notice in *The New Yorker*, Trailer Bride is really coming up in the world!

DARYL: Well, it's nice getting the recognition, right now we're looking forward to playing New York again. Usually we get good responses but sometimes it doesn't go too well.

BRUT: Are the crowds generally hostile at small rock and roll clubs like The Continental?

DARYL: Oh no, not at all, in fact we really had a great time at The Continental.

MELISSA: We were talking about that in the *No Depression* piece about how by the end of the set we had them cheering and screaming. And this while going on after punk band and preceding the headliners, who were a punk band.

BRUT: So let's talk about how everything came together. Melissa, it all started with you and another gal in a band called Pussy Teeth?

MELISSA: Oh my Lord, you've been doing your homework. You probably know my underwear size too!

BRUT: Well, I must admit you are rather fetching and a few months ago I might have been interested in your underwear but I've got a girlfriend now and so . . .

SCOTT: Like that makes a difference.

MELISSA: Actually, it wasn't a real band, it was just me and a couple of girlfriends and we were real bad. We never had any paying gigs. I

was playing bass and I would get stage freight. I remember one night my hand cramped up from fear and I dropped my pick. We were awful. I was awful.

BRUT: But undaunted . . .

MELISSA: No, I didn't get discouraged and picked up the guitar since I wrote all the songs and knew the chords. I went through several drummers and changes and then Brad came in on drums and as a three piece that's when Trailer Bride really started. That was a few years ago. Daryl then came in on bass and Scott G. followed on guitar, fancy guitar and lap steel.

BRUT: So we here honky-tonk, bluegrass and what's the je ne sais quoi, the plus that makes Trailer Bride's sound unique?





DARYL: It's blues but I call it apocalyptic blues . . .

SCOTT: Some swamp, a tad of psychedlia

BRUT: Well, all the research we've done finds writers centering on Melissa, would any of the other band members care to fill in the gaps?

SCOTT: No, I'm saving all the inside stuff for the book. When we hit big my story is going to a big publishing house.

BRUT: Melissa parent's were Baptist missionaries but they were quite fond of music? They had eclectic tastes?

MELISSA: My parents were pretty liberal for Baptist missionaries; they listened to swing and jazz and you name it. Music was always playing in the house.

DARYL: Liberal for Baptist missionaries means they did it sideways.

MELISSA: [Laughs] God, Daryl that's my parents, my mama you're

talking about. I don't want to go there. I don't want to even think about that.

DARYL: As far as the rest of us, one of us is from Columbus, Ohio and two of us are from Mississippi.

MELISSA: And there's a lot of weirdness in Mississippi. You can grow up weird in Mississippi.

BRUT: Ok, seems like we're all saving the past for the book, let's switch gears. What's the issue with authenticity. We're reading that critics are taking you to task about not having the proper background to play your music and your choice of band names.

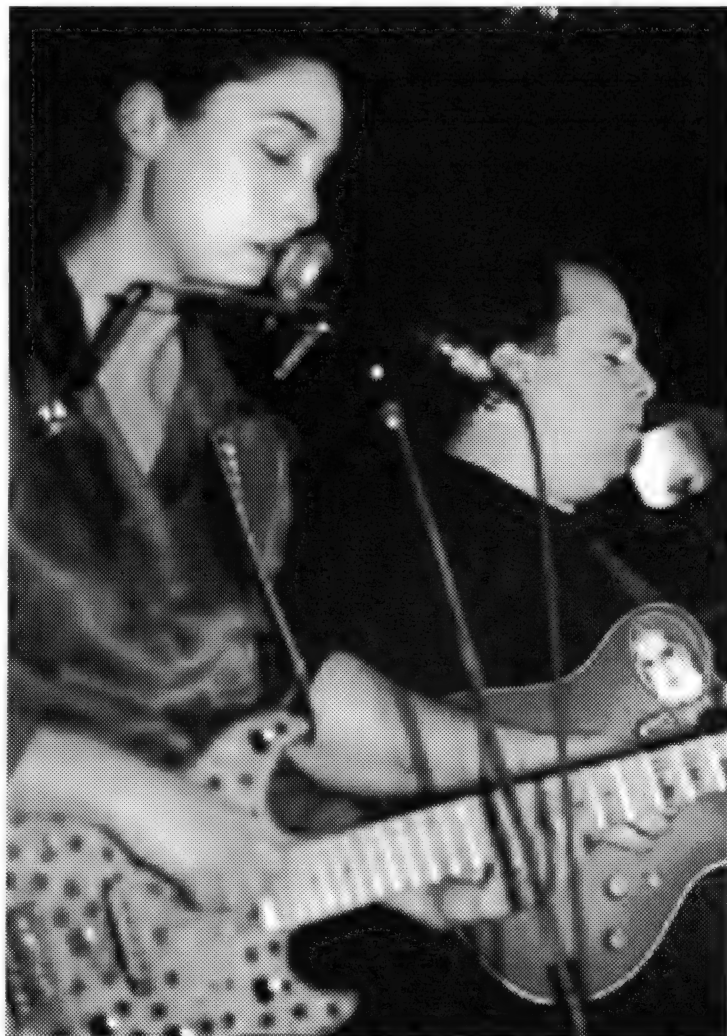
SCOTT: Oh fuck that and fuck them. Who wrote that.

Forget who wrote that; whomever is writing things like that needs to spend a week hanging out with me and after that, it's a non-issue.

MELISSA: I have honestly not read any reviews that have said that.

BRUT: Well here, and I quote from the *No Depression* article: "Some critics have questioned the group's 'validity,' suggesting that in both her choice of band name and her melting-pot approach to songwriting."

DARYL: We're just playing music we feel. It's not calculated pre-packaged nonsense. There's not a strategy involved. We're four people doing our own thing trying to make what we think is good music.



There's a lot of facets to our sound so the issue or question of validity in light of that is surprising.

MELISSA: Are we not valid because we don't live in trailers? Scott lives in a trailer. Brad lives in a trailer. I've lived in a trailer. A lot of this seems to be about the name of the band. People say that "Trailer Bride" is my making fun of those living in trailers. No, we're humble people and the name is our way of commenting on that fact.

BRUT: Melissa, your voice is a rather unique instrument and you've talked about people either loving or hating it.

MELISSA: Well, that was just my way of saying I'm self-conscious about my vocal style. That's not unusual. Jimi Hendrix was self-conscious about his voice even



though he was rarely criticized for it. I like my voice fine, I just realize it's not pretty like Jewel's. It's not a Top Forty kind of voice and it can turn people off but I like it.

BRUT: Let's turn to the songs for a minute. So many of them are about

the defeated, characters who are at the end of their rope, who are extremely neurotic and so on. Yet your life belies that. You're soldiering on with the band while raising a child, you picked up the guitar relatively late in your life; in other words, you're often not the

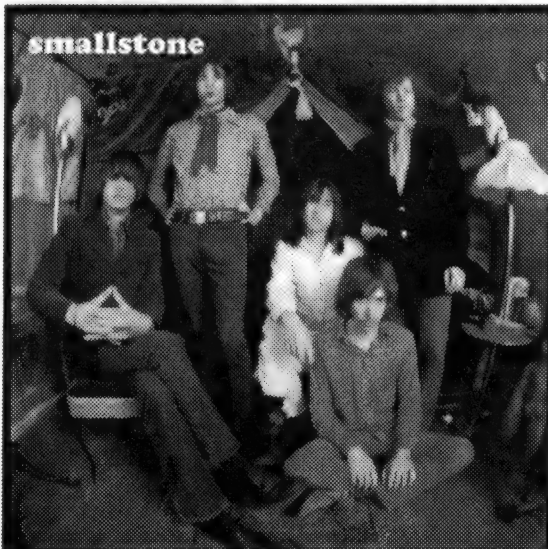
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people in your songs. You're a fighter.

MELISSA: I really don't know. It's interesting. I'm not thinking about that when I'm writing.

SCOTT: It's really very deep and complicated and I could tell you about it but I won't. One little clue: Faulkner

MELISSA: I love fiction; I've been influenced by Faulkner and O'Connor and I suppose you can call what I write fiction music. They're imaginary characters with imaginary lives. There's a little bit of me there but I'll take that and turn it into a story.

SCOTT: Whereas with me, on the other hand, my guitar playing is totally autobiographical. Also

impressionistic, when I'm having a great day I play fantastically and when I'm having a bad day . . .

DARYL: You should have more bad days, you're much more interesting on bad days.

BRUT: Ok, one final question because I see you're all anxious to join your friends upstairs in the special Friends of the Band Receiving Room. Here 'tis: Melissa has written a lovely song about her child, "Saphire Jewel," one that the other members of Trailer Bride seem to love, please comment on this quote then:

Children are cruel, ruthless, cunning and almost incredibly self-centered. On the whole, child rearing is an expensive and unrewarding bore, in which more has to be invested, both

materially and spiritually than ever comes out in dividends.

SCOTT: Whoever said that definitely did not like kids.

BRUT: It was a disaffected English nobleman.

DARYL: It sounds like a disaffected English nobleman.

MELISSA: Obviously, I disagree, child rearing is very rewarding and I think on the whole it's a positive experience. And I'm certainly not worried about it affecting my work in a negative way. A child enriches my life, deepens it.

DARYL: Living a fulfilling life is the goal. Children can be a part of that goal, certainly. They certainly don't have to be an impediment. **-B**

PREPARE FOR SONIC ASSAULT

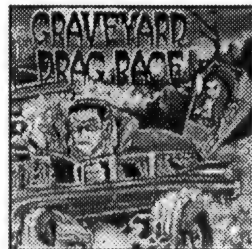
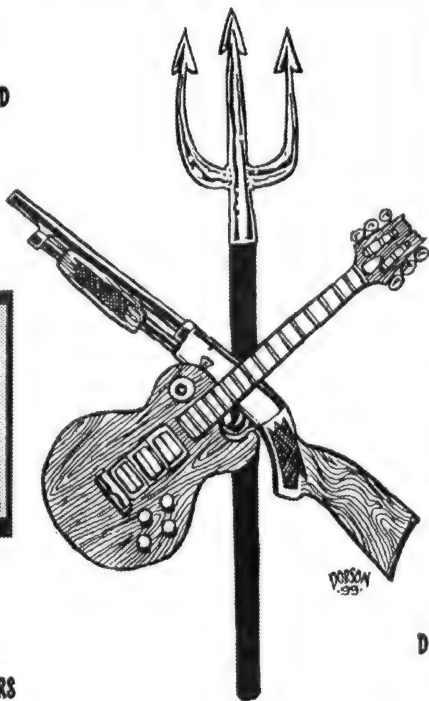


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Following Evelyn

BY JILL MOORE

Doors were always closing in our house, clicking quietly and locking secrets inside dark rooms, or slamming, angry red knuckles trying to push through the heavy wood. After two months living in the tilting, weathered Victorian house across from the cemetery, I was still trying to learn its language.

Evelyn pulled me from the bed we shared then locked herself in the bathroom. She'd stay there until we were ready to walk to school. When I knocked for her, she'd emerge, her hair teased high and sprayed, her eyes lined in black with the lids dusted a powdery blue. We'd slip down the back stairs and out the side door before mother could see her.

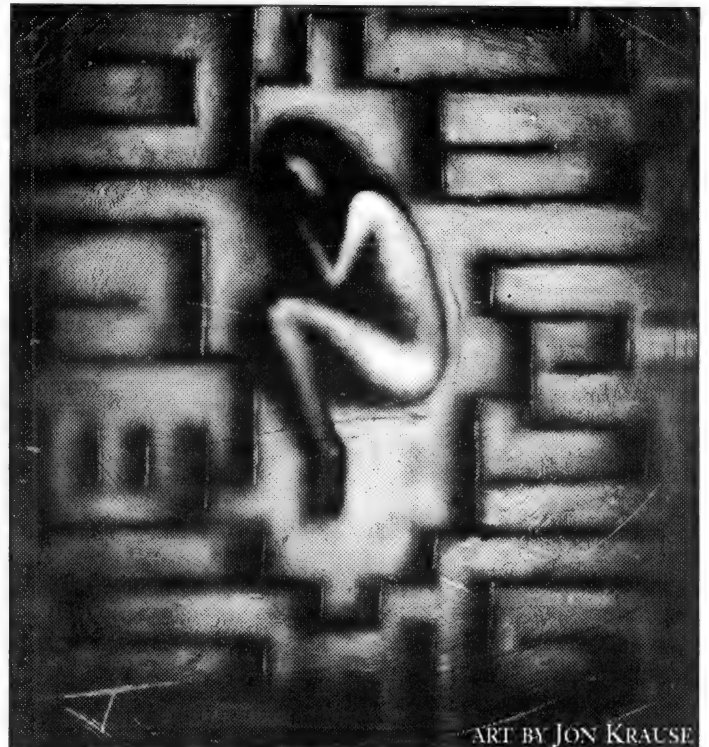
In the kitchen I moved quickly, the sound of mother's footsteps above me. I filled a bowl with cereal and milk, swished it around, then dumped it down the toilet, leaving a thin puddle of milk and a few soggy flakes in the bottom of the bowl. I poured a little juice in a glass, crumpled a napkin, and picked up my book.

I was nine years old that year, and reading *Little Women*. I was deeply in love with Jo March. In bed at night, I conjured up Jo, her long, shining hair, her straight back and strong hands, her eyes that looked firmly ahead. I imagined her striding down an old time street, meeting the gaze of strangers, safe in her strength, her goodness. No one could touch her. I dreamed of walking alongside her, drawing her strength into me.

Mother came into the kitchen. She lit a cigarette off the stove and leaned against the cracked yellow counter, her robe pulled tightly around her.

"You ate?"

"Um hm."



ART BY JON KRAUSE

She squinted at me through the smoke but said nothing. My three-year-old brother Kyle came in and buried his face in mother's robe. He was whimpering, and his pajama bottoms drooped and smelled of pee. Mother stroked his pale, knotted hair with one hand, smoked with the other, and stared out the window, into the pearly gray November morning. She let me kiss her cheek before I went upstairs.

I brushed my teeth hard, savoring the taste of the toothpaste for a long time before I spit it out. It was the one taste I allowed myself in the morning, and I could hold it for hours, rolling my tongue against it, and still be clear and sharp inside my body.

Evelyn was wearing a short green skirt, a white sweater set, and orange-tinted nylons under her knee socks. When we got to school she'd pull the socks off and leave them in her locker. I didn't know where she got her clothes; they were nothing mother would ever buy. I handed her her coat and scarf, and we listened behind our door until mother and Kyle came up the steps and closed themselves into the bathroom. I buttoned my coat against the cold morning and followed Evelyn out the back door, bumping into her when she stopped suddenly on the porch.

"Judas priest!" she exclaimed. She was practicing swearing on the way to school. "God damn it all to hell." We looked at our clothes from the day before, my navy cardigan with pearl buttons and Evelyn's red stretch pants, lying at the bottom of the steps in a soggy pile with towels, shoes and socks, and a copy of *Better Homes and Gardens*. It had rained during the night. Ripped out pages of the magazine had blown across the yard and stuck in the branches of the dead lilac bushes.

Evelyn kicked at the pile. "Jesus God-damned Christ," she said. I picked up my sweater and wiped the sticks and leaves from it. I held it, not quite knowing what to do, then hung it gently over the porch railing. As I did so, I remembered father and the uncle we hated drinking at the kitchen table last night, then later the yelling, glass breaking, then father bellowing about living with hogs and he wasn't going to put up with it, he wasn't raised in a god-damned barn and we weren't either. The back door slammed, and I guessed that they had left again. That thought allowed sleep.

Evelyn was at the end of the gravel driveway, already making the turn that would take us past the high iron cemetery gates, and I had to run to catch up with her.

"I hate that bastard." She spat on the road.

I said nothing, following her and trying to memorize each turn we made, the exact house on the exact corner where we left the main road, the sidewalks that wound through the unfinished subdivision maze and took us to the new school.

That morning her pace was faster than usual, her steps longer and surer, and she talked about the day she'd find a way to get to Kentucky, where it was warm, where her friend SueAnn worked in her aunt's restaurant. Evelyn wanted Kentucky with a passion she brought to nothing else. She never seemed to look around her as we walked; she simply charged forward, instinctively making the correct turns. I hadn't yet figured out if she took the same route each day or chose a new path that held some significance for her. For me, landscapes were a mystery, a rhythm I couldn't quite move to, so I followed Evelyn, and tried to burn the way into my mind.

It was almost a mile to the school, a combination elementary and junior high. At the door, Evelyn turned left to join the swirling, exciting junior high students, and I turned right to join the little people.

Mrs. Kelley began each Monday the same way.

"Please raise your hand if you went to church yesterday, class. Raise them high." Most hands went up, high and proud. Mine stayed in my lap.

"Now keep them up if you are Catholic." Some dropped, and the small hands left in the air seemed to grow pinker and glow with the pride of those chosen children. Mrs. Kelley had now reaffirmed all she would need to know about her fourth graders for another week.

I sat in the back row with a girl who wore a leg brace and the one black boy in the school. He tried to catch my eye, but I kept my head down, looking at my own pale hands, wishing I had the

courage to lie. Evelyn could, I knew. She felt free to create herself into anything that made people like her. And she had girl friends who called her on the phone, invited her to parties, asked her to sleep over. She was popular before I even learned the route home. My jealousy was so intense I could almost hold it in my hands and shape it into a knife to plunge at her budding chest.

The girls in the fourth grade rarely looked at me. Mrs. Kelley simply looked past me. I learned to carry a book everywhere, and after a week discovered that if I read quietly at my desk, head down, no one minded. Sometimes I'd chew the pink erasers off pencils, spitting the buds into my hand and dropping them into the small finger hole in the desk top. Dreamily I dropped into Jo's life, following her everywhere she went, only vaguely aware of

the noise of the classroom or the low, insistent rumbling of my stomach. At lunch time I put my forty five cents into the coffee can at the bottom of my locker. I had almost twenty three dollars already. Then I brushed my teeth and went to the empty library to read until the bell rang. Sometimes I slept.

We had moved in September, and two weeks later the uncle we hated showed up. He sat in the living room drinking whiskey with father. I hung on the back of my father's chair, and every now and then he filled up the cap of the whiskey bottle and let me drink it. It tasted like gasoline, but it made them laugh when I tossed it down, so I did so, earning my right to

eavesdrop.

After they sent us up to bed, Evelyn and I sat on the stairs in the dark. The uncle we hated had come from Georgia because the new aunt had thrown him out. One of the dogs had puppies, and there were too many dogs already. So he took them out back by the creek, buried them to their necks, and shot their heads off. When the aunt chased him away with his own gun, he got on a bus to Michigan. She needs to cool off, he said. She's a hot head. And they laughed.

The next day was Sunday, a warm, gilded autumn day, and we woke early, the uncle we hated asleep in Kyle's room, and Kyle in a sleeping bag on our floor. I tickled him until he woke up, then cleaned and changed him. His hair was sticking up from the nylon sleeping bag, so I brushed it down with water. Mother's door was shut, father was asleep on his hospital bed in the living room. We went out the back door and across the street to the cemetery.

Evelyn had a cast steel toy car, the wheels off, and pretended it was a camera, flipping the hood open then snapping it shut to take pictures of us posing on tombstones, smiling into bouquets of plastic flowers, doing pirouettes on soft mounds of dirt. I lift-



ed Kyle onto the wing of a stone angel and stood behind him, balancing him with my hands on his tiny hips, while he laughed. Mother always said Kyle's eyes were summer blue, but that day they were the exact color of the September sky.

We were all laughing, imagining glossy color photographs of us, gorgeous in a soft fall morning, soft flowers of children, very elegant, very charming. People would find us beautiful. A woman in a small green hat came running at us, screaming, slapping at us hard, pushing Kyle off the angel. He crumbled, crying in the soft dirt, and I crouched over him, covering him with my body while she flailed at us. Evelyn tried to push her away, but she got hold of my arm and Kyle's shirt, and pulled us across the street to our house. She banged on the door, shouting louder, calling us horrible, filthy children. Heathens. Sinners.

The uncle we hated opened the door. Teach them respect, she shouted, and father shouted something from his bed in the living room. The uncle we hated reached out a meaty arm and propelled us behind him with one big red hand. Then he pushed his head hard out the door toward her and whispered hoarsely, "Suck my dick."

Her silence was immediate; her face frozen. The uncle we hated stared hard at her, and she backed down the porch steps, weeping now. Evelyn took Kyle upstairs while uncle and I looked out the long narrow window next to the door. The woman turned and ran on white high heeled shoes back across the road into the cemetery. Mother came down the steps behind us.

"What is it? What's wrong?"

"Nothing," said the uncle. "Another hot head." He and father laughed, and I laughed too, feeling victorious but also dirty, because she had said filthy children, filthy, sinners, and she had cried.

That night when Evelyn was downstairs talking on the telephone and then uncle came into our room and palmed my buttocks under my nightgown, and ran his palms over my chest, my stomach, between my legs, calling me his sweetie girl, his baby doll, his little precious heart, I listened to his words and didn't cry. He never touched me with his fingers, never tried to reach inside me, just used his open palms with the hard skin he tried to soften with Vaseline. I kept my eyes closed tightly and tried to remember that sense of victory I'd felt that morning when the woman with the hat had fled weeping from our porch.

Now that winter had come to Michigan, we had indoor gym the last hour of every school day. There was a substitute teacher, Mr. Ellis. He was young, walked with a bounce, and joked as he led us to the gym, which was also the cafeteria. The other girls giggled as we trailed behind him. Some of the junior high girls were still sitting at a cafeteria table that had been pushed against the wall. Evelyn was with them.

"Is that your sister?" one of my classmates asked, pointing to Evelyn, and I nodded. "She's beautiful. She looks like Sandra Dee."

"No, Marilyn Monroe," another girl said.

"She's just my sister."

Mr. Ellis dragged a box of balls from the storage room and announced open gym. We were used to the President's Physical Fitness Program, jumping jacks and toe touches, rope climbing and kickball. It only took us seconds to realize that this was a rare gift, and the class broke apart quickly, girls pairing off in the bleachers with best friends, and boys wildly kicking balls at each other's head. I drifted to the door, ducked out, got my book from my locker, and drifted back in and up the bleachers to a spot away from the others.

Through the din, I heard Evelyn's laugh. Mr. Ellis sat at the lunchtable with the junior high girls. He leaned back in a folding chair, balancing on the two rear legs. His feet were crossed on the



table, and his fingers were laced behind his neck. Evelyn bit her lower lip and shook her head vigorously, but her eyes danced. I looked away.

All week long we had open gym while Mr. Ellis sat with the junior high girls. And each day I followed Evelyn home, trying to match her pace.

On Friday, just Mr. Ellis and Evelyn sat the table by the wall. He was talking, and she wasn't laughing. After the final bell rang at 3:15, I read in the doorway of the school, leaning against the brick while children streamed past me, boarded yellow buses, slammed doors of waiting cars, or walked away arm-in-arm in twos, threes and fours. I waited for Evelyn, turning pages, stomping my feet from time to time, until the sky darkened and it was hard to make out the small print.

I looked around for Evelyn. I was used to waiting for her, but never this long, and my heart began to beat quicker. A feeble rain fell just beyond the overhang. No kids gathered by the fence, no cars waited at the curb. The teacher's lot was empty. A deep cold rose from my feet, up my legs, and into my chest. When my hands started shaking, I zipped the book under my coat and went back into the school, checking the gym, the library, the girls' bathroom, and finally Evelyn's locker, which was bare, except for my empty coffee can on its side in the corner. I stared at it until the janitor backed around the corner sprinkling sawdust on the floor, then I left.

Outside I passed the parking lot and bike racks, trying to feign confidence. Jo would march on. At the first vee in the road I chose the left leg, and my chest opened a bit when I recognized

a vacant lot piled with building materials. At the second vee I stopped. I had stood there with Evelyn and looked carefully both ways, up the gently sloping road to the right that led around the house with the blue door, or down in the opposite direction, past another construction site. I had tried so hard to burn this junction into my brain that both paths had become familiar. I could see myself following Evelyn, past the house with the blue door. I could also see us trudging past the lot. My chest tightened again.

I walked to the lot, looking for something to place me, and couldn't find it. I turned back, past the house with the blue door. Suddenly I seemed completely foreign. Had I ever really walked past it? Wouldn't I remember that mailbox with a decal of geese in flight, or the blue diamonds on the garage door? I turned back toward the lot, took a few steps, knew I hadn't walked that route, turned back again, and stopped.

The silence was perfect, perfectly formed around me. The wet air was swollen and the sky had darkened. Lights came on in the house with the blue door. I sat down between the road and the hedge that had lost its leaves and stared through at those lights, hating the people inside, hating the air getting wetter and the night getting darker, hate like a thin blue light piercing through the windows of that house. Nothing happened on the street, no movement at all. The door opened, and I lay down beside the hedge, and it closed. I shut my eyes.

Much later they put a dog out. I opened my eyes to see a black and silver German Shepherd staring through the hedge. His chain rattled on the driveway. He barked furiously, leaping against the end of the chain. I closed my eyes again, tightly, imag-

ining him breaking free and leaping on top of me, tearing at my throat, biting the hands I had pressed over my face. After they called him in, I kept my face covered. In the red behind my eyes I could see patterns, shapes, shooting stars of violet and char-treuse. I imagined being inside those colors, the silence, and that wide, endless space.

The cold seeped through my blue coat, through the backs of my legs in my green knee socks, through my thin brown hair, until I quit feeling it and became almost warm. I thought about the boys at school and wondered why they were nicer than the girls. Sometimes one talked to me in line for the water fountain, and once a red-haired boy picked up my book when I dropped it in the library and smiled when he handed it back to me. Maybe they didn't notice what the girls did, that my clothes fit strangely, that my shoes were scuffed and warped, and that my eyes didn't work right. When I tried to look at something, my eyes drifted to the edges and lost their focus.

Mrs. Kelley told us that the eyes are the windows of the soul. Perhaps the girls had seen through my windows, peeked through pale rectangles of light and into rooms where Kyle woke each night sobbing, mattress wet; where Evelyn plotted her escape; where father drank whiskey and reeled crazily through rooms, ramming doorways, falling on steps and cursing, where uncle rubbed his hands with Vaseline; where mother seemed to fold into her own thin, hard body. I wanted to keep my eyes shut forever so no one could see in. I pressed harder, making the colors explode.

When it was full dark and the rain had hardened, a car drove by, then slowed and backed up. I told my body to roll under the hedge that had lost its leaves, but I couldn't. I'd taken root in the hard ground, my legs too heavy to move, my shoes turned to stone. I was lying in a cold and shallow rectangle of earth, and it had begun to close over me, it held me.

The car door opened. Boots slapped the pavement, and my mother was next to me, pulling my hands from my face, rubbing my fingers, wiping my cheeks with her scarf, breathing close to me.

"What happened?" she asked. "Where's Evelyn?"

I kept my eyes shut. Evelyn was gone. She had left us, escaped, found a doorway and stepped through it, with her straight-ahead eyes, her own certain step. I imagined her riding in a fast car with the top down, her pale hand on Mr. Ellis' leg, maybe all the way to Kentucky by now, stars throbbing in the soft night sky that wrapped around her, held her gently, promised her everything. I'd never been more envious, never loved her more, and I knew that while I couldn't follow her, I could never betray her. I shook my head.


"Baby?" She whispered. "Let's go home."

I shook my head again. She breathed in quickly and stood. I didn't move.

"Follow me," she insisted, and walked briskly to the car, boots loud on the wet pavement, and tugged the door open. I could sense her waiting there, silhouetted against the porch light, her dark coat pulled tightly around her. I could almost hear her breathe.

I pressed my hands back over my eyes, making the colors spin wildly, hoping for an opening I could slip through and be gone to my own dark and shining soft night.

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YOU CAN'T AVOID by Holly Day THE LLOYD!

BRUTARIAN chews the fat with Troma Films
schlock-meister extraordinaire LLOYD KAUFMAN

For 25 years, Troma Films and its co-founder, Lloyd Kaufman, have been making low-budget films that have pushed right through the boundaries of taboo and good taste. However, even the harshest Troma film has had its silly, fun moments—these are far from being violent, desensitizing movies. In fact, the people who do “die” in Troma films are usually massacred in such horrible ways—penile mutilations, being smashed by cars or boiled alive in toxic waste—that they leave indelible imprints in the audience, unlike the traditional commando movie that wipes out an entire bus station during the opening credits. Troma films redeem their violence by being so offensively disgusting. They’re also chock full of nudity, which Kaufman admits is a big reason the company’s managed to stay afloat for so long.

After meeting with Mr. Kaufman, it’s obvious why so many people will work for him for free—some of those who have include Samuel L. Jackson, Oliver Stone, Carmen Elektra and porn star Ron Jeremy. Kaufman is an extremely charming man who remembers everybody’s names (and if he doesn’t, he makes up a nickname for you on the spot that’s even better than your original name), and is considerate to a fault. When we finally got to sit down and talk, I realized that I could barely read my questions in the dim light. He immediately pulled his own glasses out of his pocket and offered them to me—unfortunately, our prescriptions aren’t even close. I was given the star treatment by “Unkie Lloyd” all night, from the car he sent to my house to pick me up to free food and soda at the theater *Terror Firmer* was screening as well as a T-shirt, a copy of his new book (*All I Need to Know About Filmmaking I Learned from The Toxic Avenger*), and the director’s cut of *The Toxic Avenger*. He even offered to send me a copy of *The Toxic Crusaders* movie for my son—and, true to his word, a copy of the movie showed up in my mailbox less than two weeks later. If only all interviews went this well...

Brutarian: How did you get your start in film?

Lloyd Kaufman: I made the mistake of going to Yale University, where I was rooming with a movie nut in a very small, tiny little bedroom. Our beds were head to toe, so every night, his darned stinky feet were right near my face, and I inhaled the Aroma du Troma and caught the movie bug.

Brut: So you weren’t one of those kids whose parents bought them a Super 8 when he was five so he could make movies of his friends?

Kaufman: No, no. I was interested in musicals when I was a kid. If you notice, I’ve identified with Rogers & Hart musicals and have done lots of showtunes.



Brut: What was your first movie?

Kaufman: Well, my first feature-length movie was called *The Girl Who Returned*. It was a black and white movie, made with a wind-up camera with no synchronized sound, so basically, we had to make the films like they were silent picture as and add the sound on the film later. We couldn't do direct sound at all. *The Girl Who Returned* was about a sexual world divided into two lands, men and women, and ever four years they have an Olympics to determined their supremacy in the world. It was a feature-length movie, and I showed it at Harvard, Princeton, Yale-various film societies, and we actually charged admission.

I learned a valuable lesson from that: for the most part, once people have paid money to see a film, no matter how bad the film is, they will not walk out on it and they will not ask for their money back. The other thing I noticed about *The Girl Who Returned* is that-we made up a little poster, and it was basically a G-Rated movie, but it was sort of fun, and it had a lot of Orwell influence in it, but on the poster, we had a girl who was lying down on the ground, seen from the waist up, and she had on a tight T-shirt with her melon-breasts shown very prominent, and that poster went up all around the campus. On the same night that the film first showed, there was another film showing as well, and their poster had just the name of the film with the director's name on the bottom, and only three people showed up at his film, while 348 people showed up to the screening of *The Girl Who Returned*. That kind of taught me a little bit about marketing. Gyno-America loves tight T-shirts. Heavy, heaving mounds will always draw an audience.

Also, the only thing that people liked about *The Girl Who Returned* was that there was a little bit of slapstick and there was the occasional sexy-looking shot-otherwise, the audience

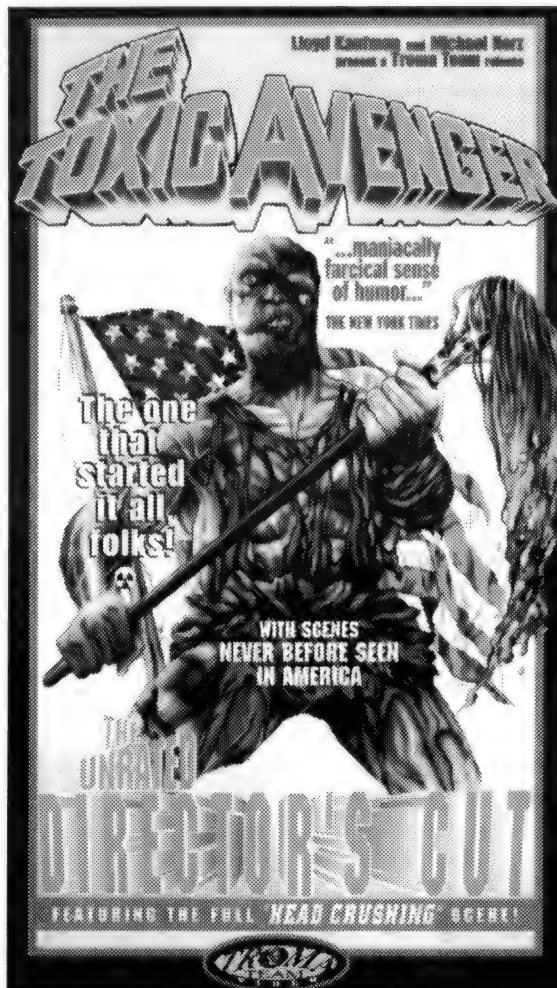
was extremely unimpressed. They didn't set fire to the seats or anything, although perhaps they should have.

Brut: Has that ever happened?

Kaufman: No, no. But again, once people have paid to see a film, they will not ask for it back.

Brut: How did you fund your first films?

Kaufman: Well, *Battle of Love's Return* was the first film I actually got into movie theaters. The budget was feature-length, and I got the money from working at a gas station and I also put a little money into the stock market and I got lucky. One of my Yale classmates put a little money into *Battle of Love's Return*, and another friend put some money in. So that's how we got the \$8,000 to do the film. Everybody in the film worked for free, of course, and I played the main part. *Sugar Cookies* was our first 35 millimeter



Lloyd's most famous, ubiquitous and inimitable son, the Toxic freakin' Avenger

film, and we basically just went out and raised money for that.

The Battle of Love's Return got a good review in the New York Times and played in a few good art houses, and then I happened to meet some dentists. Dentists, they're all rich, and a lot of them are movie buffs, so we got some money from dentists to make the film. And our friends all went out to try to raise some money, too. We managed to raise enough money to make two or three 35 millimeter

movies, which were very low-budget, and then we'd get ripped off by the distributors. And then our friends were no longer our friends. Suddenly, my partner and I saw that at some point, we would have no friends left and no money left if things kept going this way, so we decided to start learning the distribution business. So that's when we set up Troma, in 1974, to distribute movies as well as produce them, so we could control the few pennies that came into the till.

Brut: What do you think are the good and the bad things about the way film is perceived today?

Kaufman: Well, I think the dangerous thing is that the means of getting a film to the public is controlled by a handful of giant, Devil-worshipping international conglomerates who are basically killing off all the competition so they can have fewer films and they can control the marketplace. They're doing a good job at it, actually. They're controlling the variety of the films that we, the public, can get, and that's the dangerous thing about them. The fact that \$50 million budgets are being considered average means that movies have to be all things to all people, and if you have a movie that's all things to all people, it ends up being like baby food. You can live on babyfood, but it's very, very boring. Troma is the jalepeno

peppers on the pizza of our cultural world, and there are a lot of people who want to have jalepeno peppers on their pizza, and that is basically how we've managed to prosper over the years, by giving an alternative in which the public is challenged instead of just being given more shit.

Brut: What have advances in special effects technology done for Troma? How have they changed the ways you've done films over the years?

Kaufman: Well, we have pretty much created our own special effects, our own inexpensive special effects. The CGI and all the computer graphics, we have not been able to master them economically. Quite frankly, we don't particularly like them. We see them in movies where they just look really fake, and they're overused a lot, and we think that if you want to squash somebody's head, then show it. I mean, most of the special effects we do don't cost anything,

Swell... these hags make Bea Arthur look hot. Yep, it's the *Rabid Grannies*.



and I think they're a lot more effective. So we haven't really been caught up in the high tech special effects revolution.

Brut: So do you still write many of the films that come out of Troma?

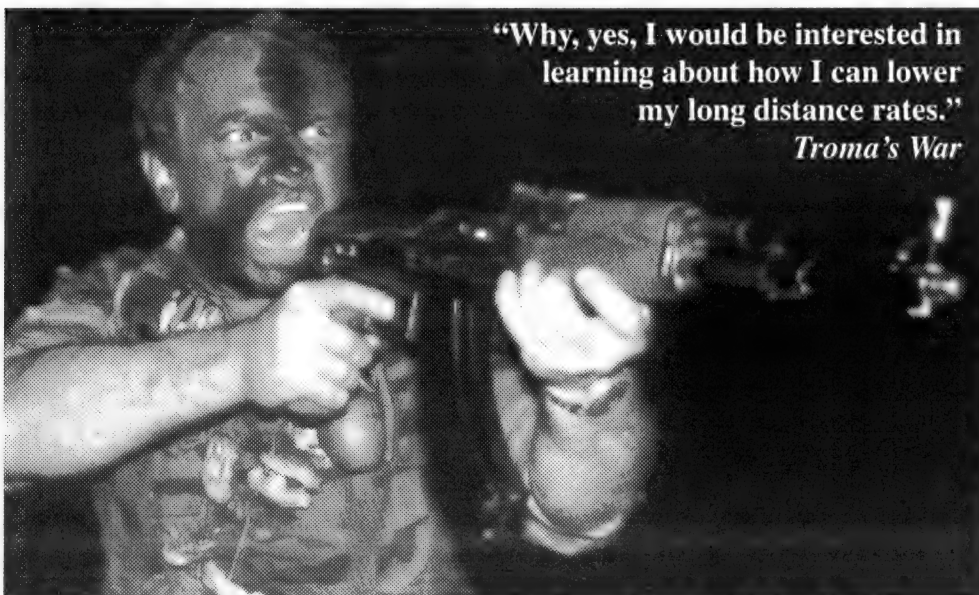
Kaufman: Yes. *Terror Firmer* is written by me, and while I collaborate on most pictures, I generally come up with the concept, the story, and I write the script with one or two younger people, so that I don't keep making the same movie over and over again, and also so I don't get stale. But I do basically dominate the process—I'm kind of an old time, auteur film director. We've made about 100 films as a company, but I've only directed or co-directed about 25.

Brut: There was a *Toxic Avenger* cartoon a while back.

Kaufman: Yes. *The Toxic Crusaders*.

Brut: I never got to see it. Is it anything like the movie?

Kaufman: Well, what makes Troma interesting is that there are a lot of historic firsts associated with it. *The*



"Why, yes, I would be interested in learning about how I can lower my long distance rates."
Troma's War

Toxic Avenger, which was a movie that not one movie theater was willing to play when it was first made, and it's a movie that has a 13-year-old boy having his head crushed by the wheel of an automobile in the history of movies, this is the only such film that was made into a children's Saturday morning, environmentally-correct cartoon show. And, it was a very good cartoon show. *The Toxic Crusaders* was killed, basically, by one of the giant companies.

Brut: Did you write scripts for that series?

Kaufman: Yeah, I wrote a couple of them. There were only 13 half-hours to the series, two of which I was allowed to write scripts for. The producers-the people who created the cartoons and produced the cartoons, did a very, very good job, and I have absolutely no complaints about them, but they were not too

keen on me actually writing the scripts. And I think, in retrospect, they were right. Out of the 13 episodes, the two of them that I wrote, the stories that I came up with, and the two scripts that I

I learned a valuable lesson from that: for the most part, once people have paid money to see a film, no matter how bad the film is, they will not walk out on it and they will not ask for their money back.

collaborated with another Troma person on, I don't think they were as good as some of the other Toxic Crusader scripts.

Right now, Stan Lee and I are collaborating on a *Sgt. Kabukiman* comic script for cyberspace, on Stanlee.com. This is news, too-we just decided to do this and this is the first time I've talked to anyone about it. It'll be aimed at Troma fans, and at the older Stan Lee fans, and then

The Toxic Crusaders will be continued in cyberspace for the kiddies.

Brut: Do you feel like films like *Class of Nukem High* are anti-drug, or is that just coincidental?

Kaufman: No! No coincidence. Again, I certainly have enjoyed recreational drugs, and I'd say that most of my college years were spent taking drugs and masturbating-that's about all I remember from college-but absolutely. I think that the message of *Nukem High* is-and there are a lot of themes there in the movie-is anti-drug, it's certainly dealing with abortion and pregnancy themes. In *Citizen Toxie*, we really pushed the abortion button. *Class of Nukem High* certainly has a sort of anti-drug theme in it. I mean, it certainly isn't pro-drug. Symbolically, it would suggest that drugs are bad because they turn people into violent mutants. *Class of Nukem High* was actually inspired by the fact that



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labor corporate fat-cat elitists were building a nuclear power plant across the street from us in New York City, and it was a nuclear power plant built out of cheap, shoddy materials so that it could have blown up and killed a lot of people. So that's what really inspired the movie. All of our movies are inspired by newspaper stories.

Brut: Do you think *Class of Nukem High* would work better as anti-drug propaganda than the government-sponsored anti-drug commercials?

Kaufman: Yeah. Oh, sure. Those anti-drug commercials are terrible. They really are, they're just horrible. That one of the girl smashing dishes in her kitchen, talking about heroin, is especially horrible. And all it does funnel money to some corrupt group that's getting taxpayer's money to do these commercials. You know, they buy the time from the stations, because I don't think the stations give up that time for free, and everybody makes out great except us taxpayers.

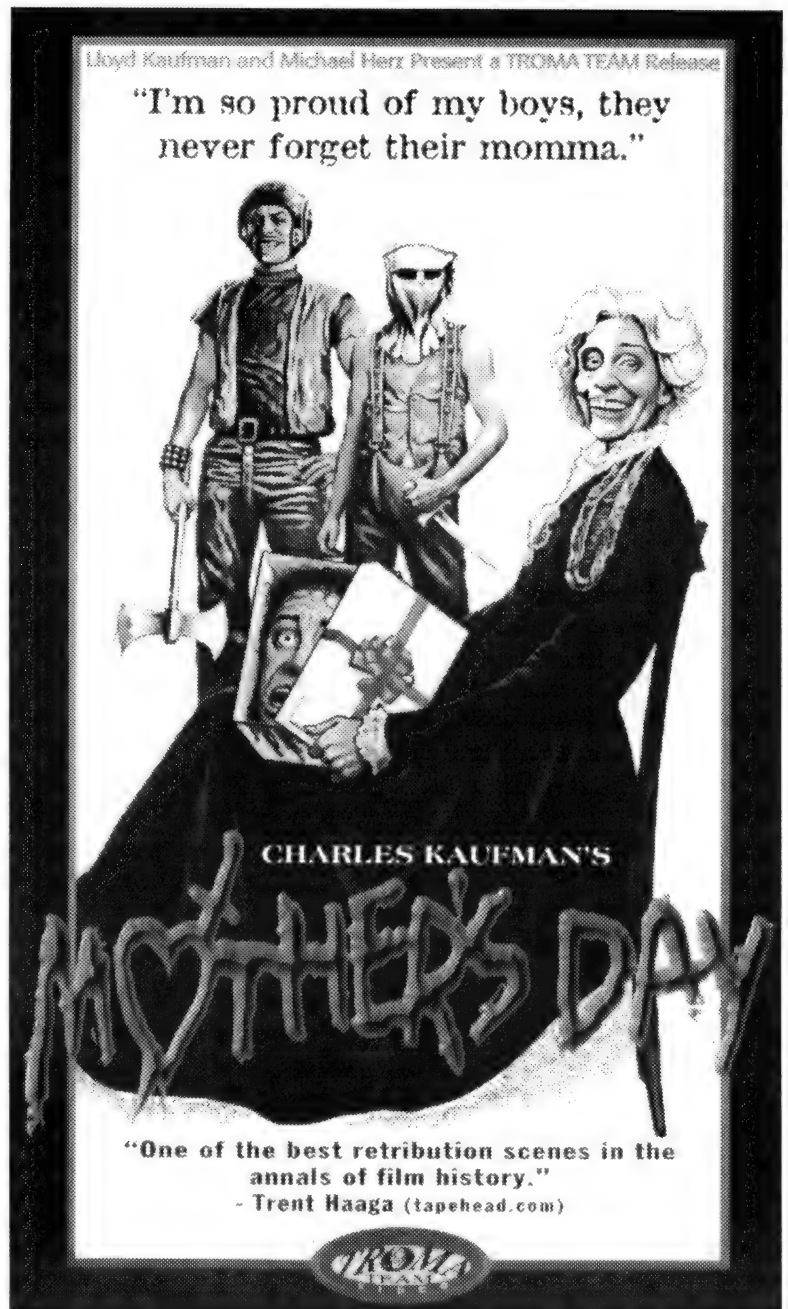
Brut: Yeah, they allocated 4 billion dollars for that.

Kaufman: That's right! Four billion dollars. Good for you—you're on the ball. I'll tell you something else the government's doing: they've put in the copyright law of 1998, which is going to mean that the standard period of time that an artist's creations can be owned by a corporation has been changed. They did that because Mickey Mouse's copyright expired in 1998, so they had to change the laws to accommodate Disney. This doesn't just effect art, either—it effects all intellectual property, from the stuff that universities steal from their students to anything you create for a company, medicine, everything. The copyrights are being extended for all of this stuff, denying those rights to the public and the actual creators. Of course, if Shakespeare had been writing *Romeo & Juliet* under the copyright law of 1998, he would have been sued, because he

copied that play from an Italian play written about 8 years before. The copyright laws should be set up to protect the artist and his or her creations during his lifetime and encourage creativity, but let the art go back to the people after his or her death.

Art is for the people. It is supposed to go back to the people who supported the artist during his life through aid to art programs and government subsidies for artists. Art is supposed to go back to the people so the people can take that Mickey

Mouse and make lots of different, better versions of Mickey Mouse. Corporation can still have Mickey Mouse to build their own better Mickey off of, but it'll be a public domain character that everybody owns. Mickey should belong to the people. And that's why we're doing the Tromadance film festival, to try to raise the consciousness of our audience and let them know that art is ultimately for the people. We all pay for it through taxes—it should belong to us. Without this law, somebody out there could



The truly brilliant *Mother's Day*. If you haven't seen it, treat your brain to a top-notch skull fuck. Remember: "Punk sucks", but "Disco's stoopid".

potentially create out of Mickey Mouse what Shakespeare did with *Romeo & Juliet*. What we're doing is building an elitist society that is going to eventually implode on itself.

Brut: The editor of *Bunnyhop Magazine* got sued a few years back for satirizing a Matt Groenig character (Binky) on the cover of one of his magazines.

Kaufman: Satire. Yes, that's another thing. The laws of this country are only applicable for those

Annette Funichello it ain't.... *Surf Nazi's Must Die.*
Well, duuuuhhhh..... of course they must.



who have money. And Troma's been at both ends of those laws. We designed these posters for my brother, who directed the film *When Nature Calls*. And the poster had a big bear and a beautiful blond woman in the same pose as in *Gone With the Wind*. But the title of the movie was *When Nature Calls*. Below the main figures were these ridiculous, goofy, cartoony scenes, and there was no way in high heaven that anyone would confuse this poster with *Gone With the Wind*. There was no way we were trading on the name *Gone With the Wind*, or on any principle of the movie itself. It was clearly satirical, which is protected under the First Amendment. But MGM came to us and said, 'You get rid of that poster or we will sue you.' Our lawyers told MGM that we were protected under the First Amendment, and cited case after case that held up that fact, and MGM said, 'Unless your client wants to spend \$4-5,000 defending the lawsuit, we don't care. You may win in the end, but

you'll be bankrupt. So we changed the poster.

Then, two years later, *The Toxic Crusaders* cartoons were being made, and they were about to come out, they've been syndicated and the stations are waiting for them, and suddenly, we start getting calls, 'Hey, you shitheads! You went around our backs and sold those cartoons to another station! And it turns out, Warner Brothers had a *Tiny Tunes* episode called *The Toxic Revengers*. And it was downright

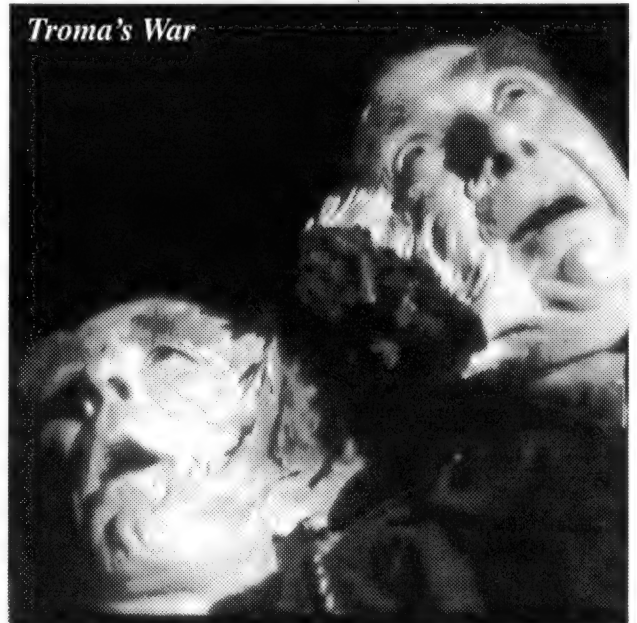
plagiarism. It was our stuff, just a little polluted, but it was our characters. And, it interfered with our business. It traded in on our name, it traded in on our ideas, it was absolutely plagiarized, and it did *The Toxic Crusaders* series irreparable damage. Our lawyers called Warner and blah blah blah, the same thing. You may be right, but we're not pulling the episodes unless you're willing to take us to court. The law's on your side, but unless you're willing to spend half a million dollars on court costs, then forget it. Eventually, we did get Warner Brothers to write a letter saying that Troma owned the Toxic Avenger name, and that they would not do any more Toxic Revenger cartoons, but they wouldn't take the three episodes they did do off the air. They're still allowed, to this day, to

make money off those episodes, which they've admitted are technically our property, and we couldn't get any damages. If we had done the same thing to them, like if we had parodied Bugs Bunny, they would have killed us. They would have murdered us. And they would have shown no mercy for doing it, either, and that's the way the laws of the land work. I'm surprised that Groenig did that, though-although it was probably his lawyers or FOX that actually did it.

Brut: What do you think about the cult of celebrity that's been developing in the US over the past 50+ years?

Kaufman: That's part of the elitist group that's controlling America. This notion that we're all supposed to be delighted that Sharon Stone is wearing a \$300,000 ring, and we're supposed to admire the fact that Tom Cruise makes \$20 million for one movie-that's just an obscenity. People talk about *Terror Firmer* as being obscene, but the real obscenity is that \$100 million was spent on a piece of shit like *Wild, Wild West* when 25% of American children go to bed hungry, when entire continents are falling off the face of the earth because of hunger and starvation and AIDs and God knows what else, when genocide is rampant in neighboring countries-I mean, this era that we live in, 50

Troma's War



years from now, our culture? Western European culture could be looked upon in the same way that Hitler was looked upon. Not that we actively have murdered 6 million Jews, but because we are sitting around worshipping Tom Hanks while a short jet ride away, 8 hours away, people are dying, they're dropping like flies from curable diseases. And that's pretty fucked up.

So I think the cult of celebrity is disgusting. And again, that's what the Tromadance film festival is all about. Our festival will give no perks to celebrities. We had a party in LA for the opening of *Terror Firmer*—thanks to Ron Jeremy, by the way, who got us the Hustler store where we could have our party, which was right down the street from the theater—and there was this big line of people waiting to get in, and whoever got there first could come to the party. Stan Lee and Michael Bay, the director of *Armageddon*, were waiting in line, there were all these celebrities waiting in line to get into the party, and they didn't get any special treatment. They had to wait just like everybody else to get into the party. We didn't let them in first, or bring them around back to sneak in before anybody else. They were waiting patiently, too—they were perfectly happy waiting in line with everybody else. They thought it was fair.

Brut: Do you think the Hollywood problem is going to get better any time soon?

Kaufman: I think so. I think that the kids are fed up with the whole thing. I think that the Y Generation is rebelling against television. They're looking at television as a parent figure, and I think they're rebelling against brands, I think they're sick of

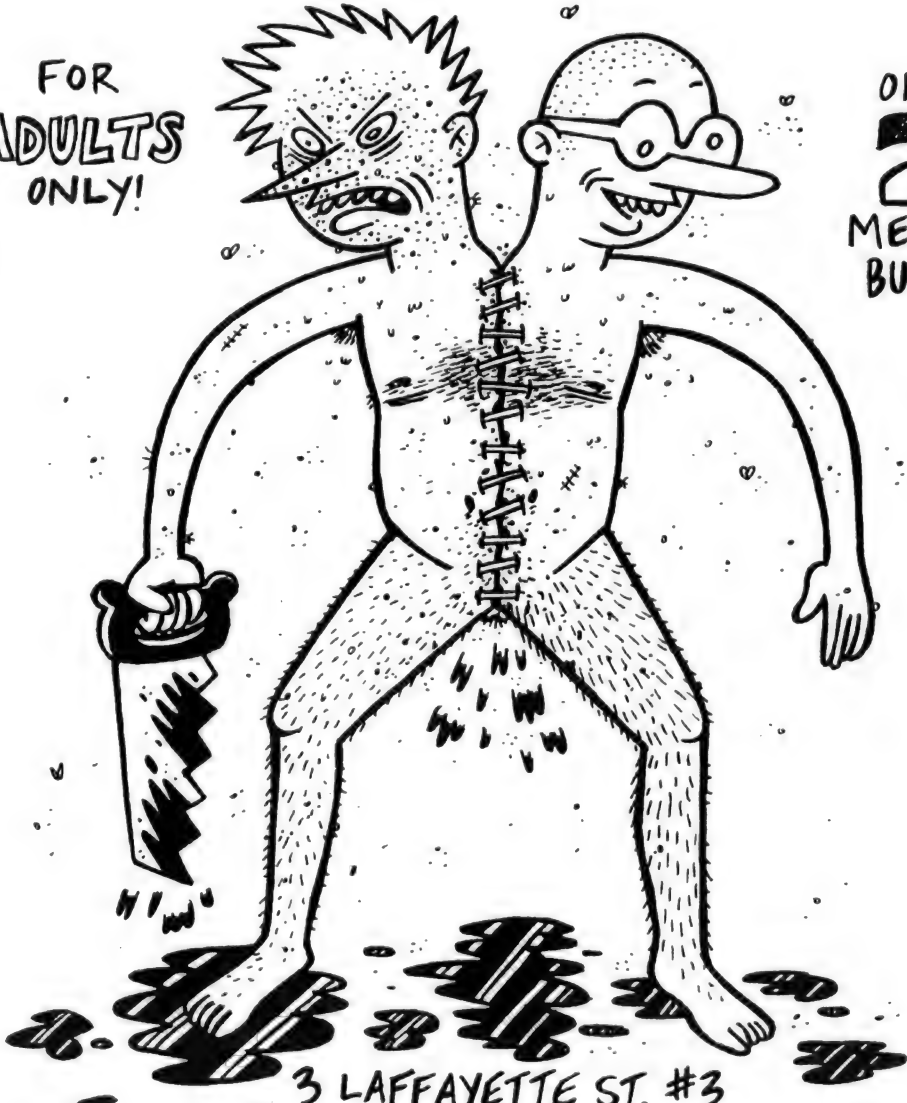
being told to go and buy shoes made by slaves. I find it disgusting that these athletes go around running over people and getting millions of dollars a year. Troma has a portal called Tromaville.com, which is a community of Websites, all alternative, independent channels, and we're getting 30

million page hits a month now, and I think there is indeed hope. I think digital technology, the Internet, will enable those who are gifted and creative and want to be true to his or herself to get his or her art to the public, and you won't have to make boring cookie-cutter art to get accolades. **-B**

Johnny R.'s

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On Manor's mind.....

by Stately
Wayne Manor

Ever enjoying life so thoroughly you spontaneously burst into song while strolling down the street? I, neither, but I'm going to perform the literary equivalent here as something of a challenge.

Now, you're probably under the preposterous notion you *too* are wordsmith enough to be a pro penslinger. Here's your first test: I'll write the beginning of an original song line, then you complete it; and, as a hint, I have provided the first letter of the best missing response. (Answers appear at the end.)

Ooooooooooh, I bet Helen Hunt/has a really tight c_____.

Though there are exceptions (e.g. Rob Reiner), for the most part, I have always harbored a grudge against Relatives Of The Stars (ROTS). This has nothing to do with envy over possessions or ROTS getting immediate seating at Spago's joint. What irritates me is how, based solely on heritage, these freaks, geeks and sneaks get an express ticket to their *own* celebrityhood while the truly deserving have to shimmy up a greased string of razor blades (or author columns.)

Ooooooooooooooh, nude Alicia Witt/had a fully engorged c_____.

The big question is, who are the most obnoxious ROTS of 'em all? Sure, creatures such as Ben Stiller and Julian Lennon grate on any rational beings nerves. But I am referring to those "stars" who combine an absolute lack of any discernable entertainment skill with the utmost in offensive personalities. (You know: like if Hulk Hogan was Paul Hogan's brother.)

Though I'm liable to change the lineup as I please, I've dwindled the nominees down to the tiresome twosome I consider the most obnoxious ROTS at the moment of this writing, listing them in (con)descending order.

—With the Zappa brood, one could say a crappitude was genetically predetermined, being Frank was a hipper-than-thou snob appealing to pseudo-intellectuals who thought he was a stylistic genius because they had never heard Varese. But while Dweezil inherited the git-picking ability and became less intolerable as he matured, and Moon thankfully returned to oblivion, Ahmet Zappa seems bent on being obnoxious enough for the three of them.

A cross between a second-rate class clown and one of those sports fans who paints himself blue in order to get on camera for a split second, Ahmet's mugging is so incessant and annoying, he makes Jim Carrey look like Jim Nabors. Everything about him, from the shaved head to the nerd glasses to the relentless posturing, shouts "Hey, look at me"; but once you give him your attention, there's nothing to see.

In short, the boy's as useless as turn signals on a freight train. What's *really* scary is the fact that pathetic teleproducers think this wackaholic is "cutting edge" and appealing to *us*, the free-spending demographic. *Appalling* is more like it. Who could possibly be any worse? Well....

—"Charlie Weaver," a beloved character from the Fifties through the early Seventies, was an ex-vaudevillian made up as a bumpkin and occasionally as a woman. Weaver's grandson, Alex—a/k/a Alexis—Arquette spends his time primarily in female clothing and could use a severe bumpkin on his headkin with a hammerkin.

Granted, it must have been difficult for the youngen to get attention in that House Of Kooks; and, if Alex opted to wear frocks, so be it. I've got nothing against alternative lifestyles. But the way Miss Thing sashays around like he *invented* the whole scene and demanding we be impressed puts a very large spur down

the front of my pantyhose.

Obsessed zealots do much more harm than good for their causes—and Arquette's a veritable Jehovah's Witness when it comes to transvestism. Isn't a drag queen being a drag terribly redundant?

Heeeeeey, Cynthia Rothrock/perform a kata on my c ____.

Listen up, Al, and I'll set the record straight. Never mind that cross-dressing has been going on for millennia, even in "modern times" it's way past played out. In the pre-punk glitter era, if you weren't wearing at least one item of feminine garb, it actually implied you lacked security in your masculinity. Take a look at the first NY Dolls album cover. That was shot in '73, smacker. Over a *quarter-century* later, there's nothing daring, new or startling about being the prettiest boy on the block. Sorry, kid, but **NOBODY ELSE GIVES TWO** about your tired scene, and the only people you might shock are a couple of rubes just off the Greyhound from Iowa. Now shut the hell up and get out of our faces.

Incidentally, "experts" commonly push the notion that TVs are hetero. So, the reason enlightened Manormaniacs want to slap the rouge off your mug is not because they think you're "a faggot." It's because they know you're an asshole!!!

SPEAKING OF BUBBLEHEADS

dressing up to be something they clearly aren't, did Offspring's "Pretty Fly For A White Guy" and accompanying video score a direct hit or what? Although their public stance generally reflects an acceptance of snowflakes "embracing the hip-hop culture," I find it **very** difficult to believe that, privately, homeboys aren't dissing cracker clowns trying to be down.

I've got an idea: instead of killing each other, why aren't the legit gangsta rappers offering a few ofay impostors like the Kottonmouth Kings, making it very clear they're icing them specifically for imitating black men, thus terrorizing the rest of the milkpies right back to Candyassland? If you won't do it for the principles, just think of the economical advantage of having all those fair-skinned phonies out of the way!

Ooooooooooooh, a Jane Robelot job/is to give Stately a b ____.

Honkeyologists suggest exploited ebons remain calm. Sooner or later, the palefaces will move on to another culture to bastardize from the safety of the mall. In fact,

SWM's ESP foresees a wagonload of whiteys (poorly) aping all things Asian before the end of the decade. In one of my early Brut classics, I labeled the offenders "Uncle Leroy's," though "wiggers" seems to be the term more commonly recognized. Hence, if wigger is a combination of "white" and "nigger," I hereby dub the round-eye Wong-wannabes "Whinese."

Remember where you read it first.

Ooooooooooooh, the ghost of Mama Cass/begged me to stick it in her a ____.

That reminds me: the promised lyric answers. Reading from top to bottom, they're cravat, carotid artery, carpet, banana and ashtray. Why, what did *you* have?

HUBBA HUBBA HONEY: Not generally the type to go with feelgood crap like "turn a negative into a positive," I'm going to continue with the column's theme and make an exception here.

It has come to my attention, in a previous OMM, Hubba nominee Lynne Russell's first name was misspelled "Lynn." Fortunately, this gaffe creates an excuse for not only mentioning the ravishing redhead again, but to make her the sole fetching femme ever elected to Honeydom **TWICE!**

On what grounds? Startling new evidence, Your Dishonor. Upon covertly following her home from...er, um, I mean, uh, surfing the web, I have discovered luscious

Lynne is not only a black belt, but also a licensed private eye. (Ooh, frisk me, baby, then slap on the cuffs!) And having since seen her in profile, I can assure you Ms. Russell wouldn't be out of a place in a Russ Meyer feature, so fab is her frame.

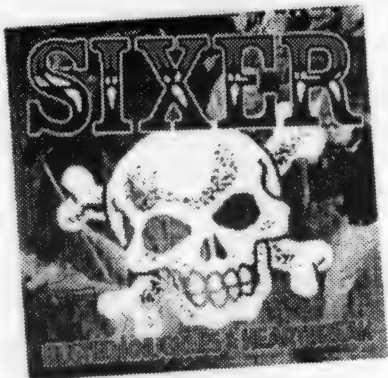
To think, I gave the Sexpot Of CNN the first nomination based on just her personality, voice and brains. A seductive-toned, bright, fellow celebrity journalist into martial arts, working under the same umbrella as World Championship Wrestling and, as they say in Brooklyn, "built": I learn her legit *last* name also ends in a vowel, I may even allow her to propose to me! (How lucky can a gal get?)

—SWM

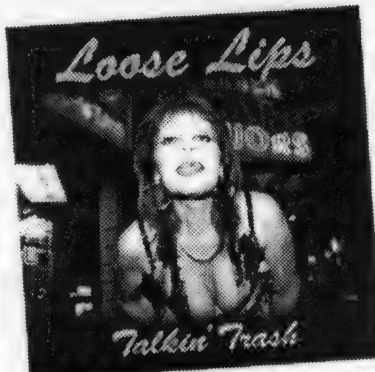


The powerful Lynne Russell, CNN's most feared weapon

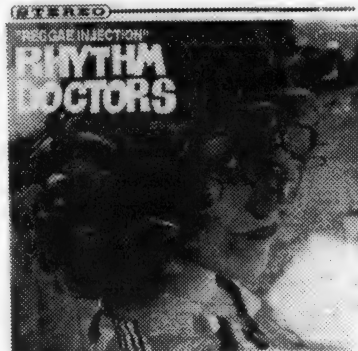
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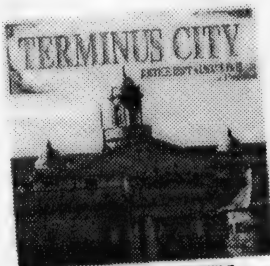


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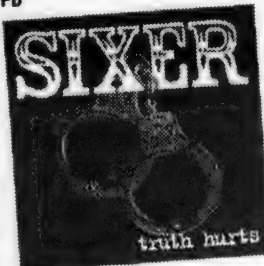
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A DOPPIA FACCIA

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Ladies and gentlemen, we present for your edification and delectation: the Eurotrash soundtrack. While it's exponents aim chiefly to amuse it is, first and foremost, amusement for those sated with life's simpler pleasures - alcoholism, sado-masochism, drug abuse. The first nine cuts are a decadent frappe of Mod and melancholy, temerity and diffidence, celebration and mourning, petit orchestral music taking the elevator to the top floor. The remainder dizzily plays on your now frazzled nerves with a kind of faux-Gothic tempered with high seriousness, surreal kitsch leavened with the unearthly, Alkan on acid, Mantovani ridden to the mountains of madness. Melodic susurrations spilt from the teeming brain of composers in the grip of horrid phantasmagorias.

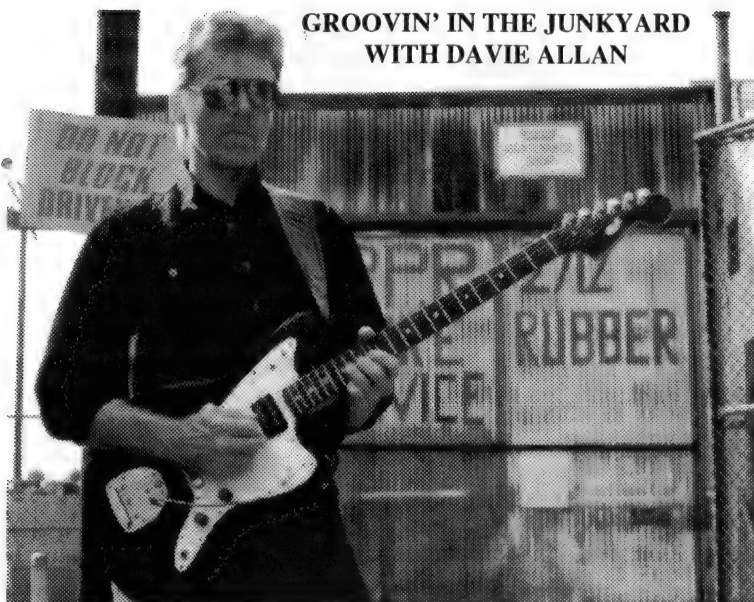
DAVIE ALLAN
The Arrow Dynamic Sounds Of
 (Bomp)

We're happy that Davie still records but what we don't understand why guys like Eric Clapton and Carlos Santana make all the money. Alright, unlike Allan, those guys do not play no rock and roll but when did it become a crime to play



rock and roll? Well, he's much bigger over in Europe than he is here and you know it's just a matter of time before Bear Family puts out a multi-disc disc career summation like they did for Duane Eddy. But before that happens you need to buy everything, we mean EVERYTHING, this guy has released 'cause there's nobody playing guitar today combining the muscular with the lyrical, working the ironic poetic, assaying cheese while cutting the mustard. Tremolo bar wagging and wah wah in service to heavy fuzz only begins to describe the magic in Allan's trademark "Born Losers" and his reworking of "James Bond"

GROOVIN' IN THE JUNKYARD WITH DAVIE ALLAN



& "Goldfinger" themes. Bomp's turned up the volume for this collection and Davie's responded by delicately treading a narrow catwalk between the ridiculous and the sublime.
ds

BE A CAVEMAN Best of the Voxx Garage Revival (Voxx)

Voxx was and still is, apparently, the legendary LA label founded by Bomp honcho, Greg Shaw in the late 70s as a reaction to the commercial transmogrification of punk into new wave. Shaw's

goal was rather fantastic, to say the least, a revival of the 60s garage and psychedelic scene, a scene that really only could be said to exist at the margins. Of your mind, my mind or anybody's mind you'd care to ask. In any case, Shaw opened a club to better push his scene and despite incredible odds his label thanks to 45 and lp releases by the likes of DMZ, Chesterfield Kings and the Pandoras, became something of a succes de scandale. Today, there's a whole industry cranking out fab retrovisions and Mr. Shaw has decided to do a little back-patting with this twenty-seven cut



overview most of which is pretty hot and as good as almost anything you can find by 60s garage avatars. Especially boss and ripe for further study are Plan 9, a four guitar ur-band covering the whole gamut of primitive rock stylings and the Miracle Workers, Portland fuz-zadelics looking to their own backyard via the Sonics and the Wailers for insane inspiration.
ds

BLUE CHEER Live in Japan 1999 (Captain Trip Records)

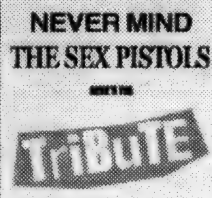
OK, so they practically invented heavy metal while putting over the idea that three imbeciles could generate a helluva lot of power. A brilliant strategy for a group lacking musical ideas, no? Lacking a lead singer as well, one who couldn't put over a song if his life depended on it. Vic Damone, founder and guiding light, Dickie Peterson, was not. Let us admit, though, that Blue Cheer, in its time, achieved a level of heaviosity undreamt of in the philosophy of today's met-

aloid proponents and *Live in Japan* does little to dispel this notion, myth, whatever. Moreover, a ringer, calling himself Andrew Duck MacDonald has been recruited to play guitar and his distorto psychedelic blasts, blurts and bleats are simply not to be believed. In MacDonald's able fingers, wretched excess is transformed into a kind of absurd, surreal poetry, immaculate idiocy which reaches an apotheosis of sorts in the final cut "Doctor Please," eighteen minutes of deranged six string rambling in the service of absolutely nothing.
ds

THE CONDORS Tales of Drunkenness & Cruelty (Vital Gesture)

Well of course it scores lots of points on the shining brilliance of the title alone, but cripes, now if only it were longer than 20 minutes. This three-piece crew really know their way around the garage, from the crunchy opener "Got No Reason" to the hoot-

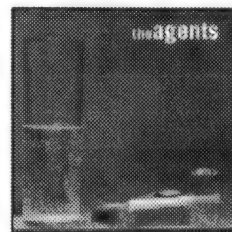
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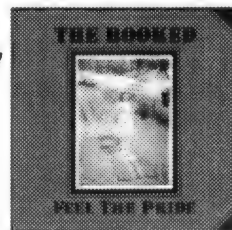


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nanny-flavored "Drinkin' Myself to Sleep." They also unexpectedly distinguish themselves mightily by vocalizing with such clarity that you can understand every single word, some of which is pretty darned amusing: "I'm not sorry for the drinks I drunk, I'm not sorry for the things I thunk . . . You're as obsolete as a beige Corvair/I'm not sorry and I don't care."

Now back to the garage, you sots, and don't come back until you've written a full album's worth.
bh

DIRTY THREE
Whatever You Love, You Are
(Touch & Go)

Behold, the winner's of this issue's coveted prize for "Least Commercial." Dirty Three are a generally introspective, and sometimes downright melancholy trio turning out longish instrumentals with nothing more than drums, rhythm guitar, and a violin handling most of the melodic chores. Gee, you'd think MTV would hop all over a

THE DIRTY THREE



thing like that, wouldn't you? Picture it as the soundtrack to the last bittersweet days of a meandering road trip west, ending in the tragic but inevitable parting of the ways with your traveling companion. Excuse me . . . I must go . . . I must weep now.
bh

THE DRAGS
Set Right Fit To Blow Up
(Estrus)
ESTRELLA 20/20
Afro Mexicana
(Estrus)

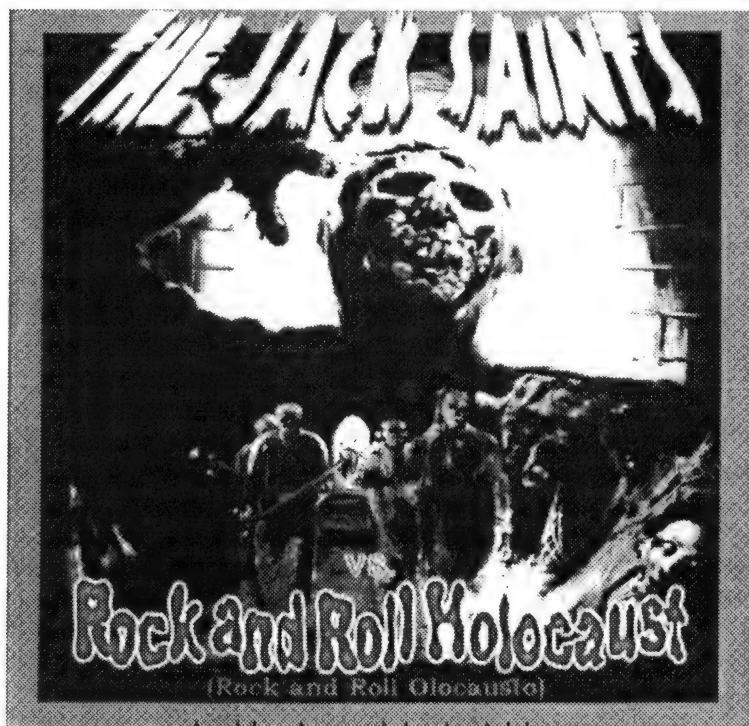
Visionaries like Estrus Records' founder, Dave Crider, often find themselves at war with themselves when confronted with avant garage bands. On the one hand, there is the pull toward encouraging innovation and experimentation of almost any kind; on the other, the push to dismiss anything and everything which do not sound like rock and roll. The Drags, a noisy, self-consciously sloppy, post-modern combo, embody the dilemma facing Mr. Crider: What to do with a group so intimately acquainted with the nuts and bolts of production and arranging that songwriting comes almost as an afterthought? Here's a suggestion, Dave: Have The Drags ask themselves why their version of Led Zep's "Communication Breakdown," clever and amusing as it is, doesn't stand up under repeated listenings? Final answer? Yes, that's right, contempt and scholarly attention to the irrelevant detail quickly tires even the most indulgent listener.

Bull-dada rockers, Estrella 20/20 share The Drags passion for experimentation; what they eschew, however, is the almost studied cool of their American counterparts. These Japanese

critters, with their distorted, feedback heavy, riff 'n' chord constructions, simply do not believe intelligence and loud music make for a heady mix. Thus, the off-key singing, bellowing really, while the band searches for a key, any key. Hence, the intercutting of psychotic, bluesy-psychedelic forays at every turn. Ergo, a sound as muddy as the Mississippi River after a week of torrential spring rain. Leading one and all to the ineluctable conclusion that while it is good to care it is sometimes gooder not to care too much. Or at all.
ds

eARTHLINGS?
s/f(efto, one more time:
eARTHLINGS?)
(Man's Ruin)

Yes, that's really little-e, capital everything else, question mark, and speaking of question marks, don't you kind of hate pointelss affectations? T'would appear that what we have here is largely a one-man band, with drop-in assists from Dave Grohl, Victoria Williams, and others, all of whom are in a more experimental mood than usual. Imagine, if you will, Hawkwind, finally setting the spliffs down long enough to step forward a couple of decades. Wait, come back! Fans of spacious and texturally-oriented music should find plenty to interest them here. Although considering these eARTHLINGS interest in things interplanetary, does



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anybody else besides me find it a tad ironic that the mix sounds rather lo-fi and muddled? E.Q., phone home.
bh

T-MODEL FORD

She Ain't None of Your'n
(Fat Possum)

Old old old. Seventy-seven, likes to fight, likes to drink, enjoys violent arguments with his woman. So this mutterin' moanin' guitar knockin' Mississippi bluesman is putting out albums as fast as he can before he dies or someone kills him. This is his third in three years and like its predecessors its pure down-home boggie chillun stomp for the most part seasoned with sharp ju ju and biting gris gris. *Your'n* bounces and it rolls but its got a deep undercurrent to primeval moan and groan, nasty for nastiness' sake, T'aint evil exactly, but it sure enough comfortable sitting next to it.
ds

THE FRAMPTON BROTHERS

File Under F (For Failure)
(Cacophone)

From nasty break-ups to getting sloppy drunk, pop-rockers the Brothers Frampton still, after ten years in the biz, operate from a stranglehold on terminal adolescence, but isn't that the number two occupational hazard after venereal disease? They cop licks from everybody and THEIR influences, and a splendid time is guaranteed for one and all. Especially with such self-actualizing fare as "Shit-Colored Glasses" and "The Devil (or Anyone Else Who's Better Than You)". As a bonus, if you've ever lain wide awake at night wondering what ex-Monkee Davy Jones would've sounded like if (a) he hadn't been a Brit and (b) was instead recording in this day and age, Ed Masley's beyond-tenor vocals will let you rest easy. I mean, I never wondered about a thing like that, but you might've.
bh

GOLDEN SHOWERS

Golden Showers

(Reptilian)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Hell Ain't A Bad Place To Be
(Reptilian)

A couple of fairly new releases from our favorite CD/record store out Baltimore way . . . First, the Golden Showers, a German/NYC-based band known for using nuns, leather, whips, etc., in their live act - on record, this is LOUD, noisy, blues-inflected rock & roll, comprised of part Oblivians, part Honeymoon Killers, part Cramps, part Roy & The Devil's Motorcycle (Swiss crackpots), and part XXX-rated fetish videos. Nine tracks in twenty-five minutes, twangy guitars, heavily distorted vocals, loud feedback and noise. If you like any of the above-mentioned bands (or videos), or you're just into water sports, buy this - you'll love it!

Second, a killer AC/DC tribute album, featuring many of today's best rockers - The

Dwarves, Supersuckers, Chrome Cranks, REO Speedealer, Zeke, the Upper Crust, Electric Frankenstein, and more, all doing their interpretations of their faves from the boys down under. It sounds just like you knew it would - great bands doing excellent songs - another for your collection, and another tribute album that doesn't suck (and believe me, there aren't THAT many out there!).
jo

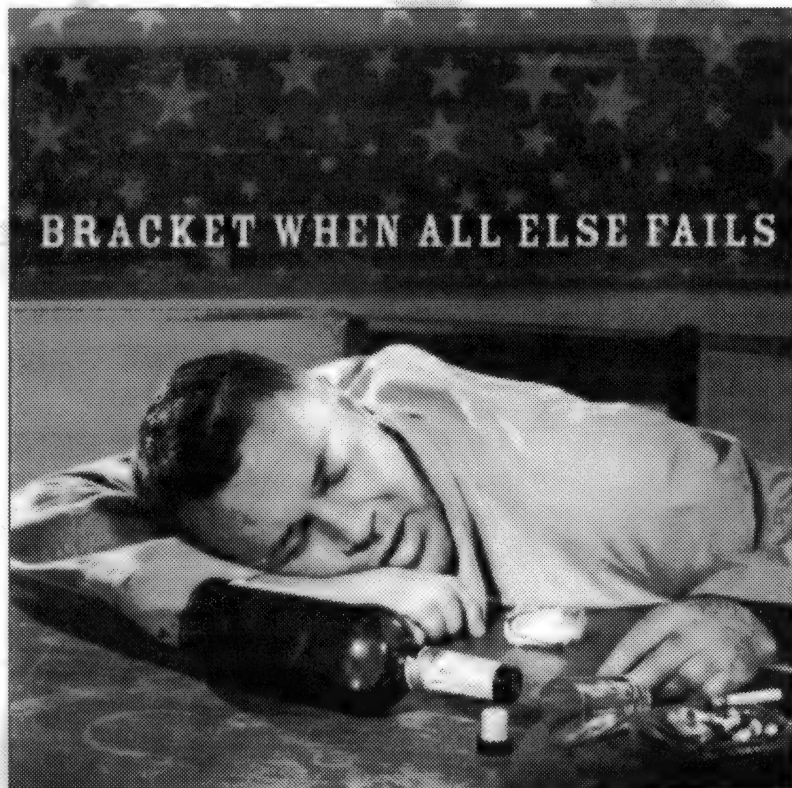
GOLDIE

Incredible Sound of Drum 'n' Bass

(Columbia)

The biggest name in drum and bass graces us with a two disc DJ mix set (that's where one takes tracks composed by others and messes with them until they bear little relation to the original) a sixteen page booklet chronicling his improbable rise to fame - foster homes, gold tooth salesman in Miami, work with Bjork - and almost nothing in the way of

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-Lollipop

"How can these guys write so many great songs?....I love them all."
-Eye deal

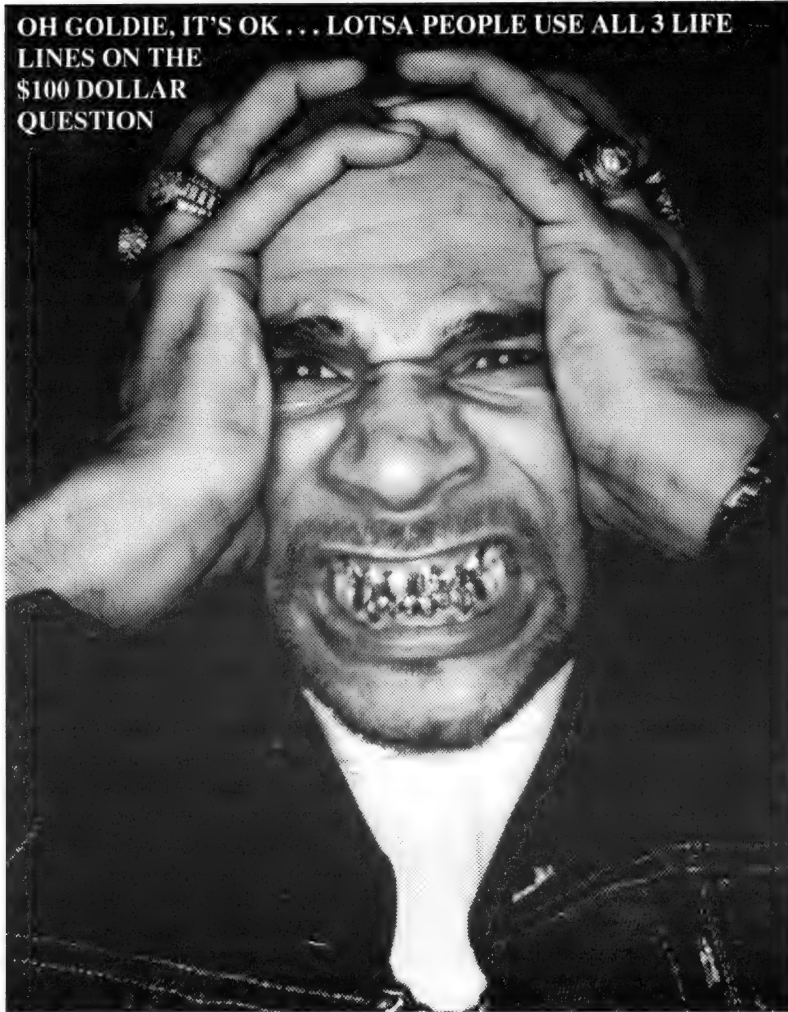


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OH GOLDIE, IT'S OK . . . LOTSA PEOPLE USE ALL 3 LIFE LINES ON THE \$100 DOLLAR QUESTION



music. What the listener gets is the business: skittery beats, keyboard squalls, the absence of melody, repetitive arrangements and annoying as an aesthetic. Take a long hard look at the cover - Goldie, metallic teeth barred as if in pain, hands clasped over his head as if he's just finished ripping his hair out - this could be you should you be so foolish as to slap this remarkable audacity on your disc player.
ds

THE HORRORS
The Horrors
(In The Red)

Must be something in the water in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. How else to explain how three 21-yr old kids managed to record, in one day, a rock 'n' roll long player so twisted, so uncompromising so almost undefinable as to boggle the ever-lovin' mind. Just goes to show that if you've got the beat and a damaged voice you can do just

place of nuance? Yes, please! Cedar Rapids, my next vacation? Ab-so-fucking-lutely.
ds

JESUS LIZARD
Bang
(Touch and Go)

Imagine my surprise: This isn't Christian rock AT ALL! but seriously, shed a tear, for here stands the tombstone to the career of one of the legitimate contenders to the throne of 90s greatest live band. Bang is an hour-long, odds-n-sods collection of B-sides, live tracks, and unreleased cuts, all featuring the Lizards' jangular, revved-up intensity and off-center arrangements: compositions that unsettle the mind as they bitch slap you toward the nearest wall. And the yelps, yowls, warbles, and skewed perspective ("Don't met me wrong, he's a nice guy and I like him just fine . . . but he's a mouth breather.") of David Yow make it official: Truly, here was the long-lost offspring of Lux Interior.
bh

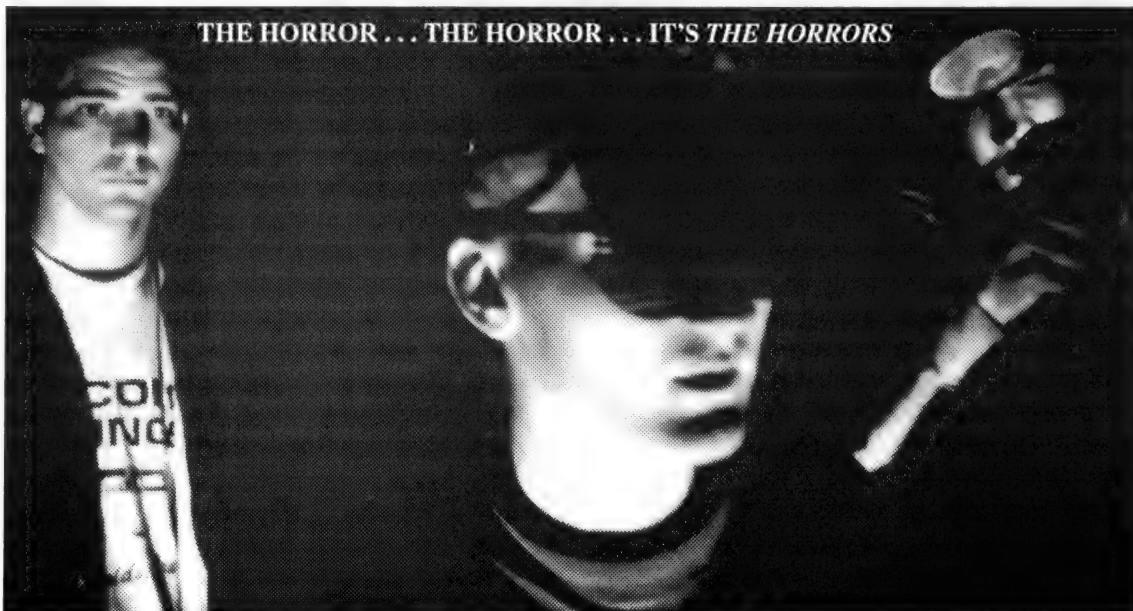
KITTIE
Spit
(Ng/Artemis)

We hold no illusions vis-a-vis women's and men's aesthetic abilities. Somewhere, in an untended Austrian graveyard,

lies the female Mozart. Kittie sets their sights a little lower; they would be quite happy earning recognition as a distaff Korn. Or is that Napalm Death? No matter, as this girrrly metalcore quartet bring new wine to the old ceremony while managing to sound at once disaffected and engaged, turned on and turned off, hortatory and seductive. This is beauty disguised as vulgarity, lacking education and refinement, possessing neither wit nor common-sense, behaving with bestial ignorance. And yet, Oh! and yet, displaying all the childish foibles of WOMAN.
ds

LAS VEGAS GRIND
Volume Six
(Crypt)

At *Volume Six* the good folks at Crypt are obviously scraping the bottom of the barrel but as we're talking about music with that as its intended destination we really shouldn't complain too much should we? Inane novelty numbers, racist exotica, flaccid rhythm and blues vamps - background music for drinking, chatting and eyeballing. Failures by anybody's standards (save for three or four cuts out of the twenty-six here) and that includes the alcoholics and sexual deviants who originally sat for this. Still, there's enormous entertainment value in compositions too horrible to even qualify as kitsch. There's a word for it we're sure but no matter how



THE HORROR . . . THE HORROR . . . IT'S THE HORRORS

much Mickey's Big Mouth we down, damn if we can come up with it.
ds

LIBERATOR **Worldwide Delivery** (Epitaph)

Pretty nifty stuff here. Weird how it came to be, but there it is. Jamaica, via Sweden, with a weirdie Brit or even perhaps Australian twang in good old English.

Ska. Right?

Snappy work what with the horns and interesting themes. No sappy love songs about lamented lost flames or any of that other kind of crap. Just down to earth pieces about real life in the real world done real well. No screaming or cater-wauling. Instruments operated correctly, per the plans and specifications. Plus, as a special bonus, they even managed to get the right airplane on the cd cover.
jm

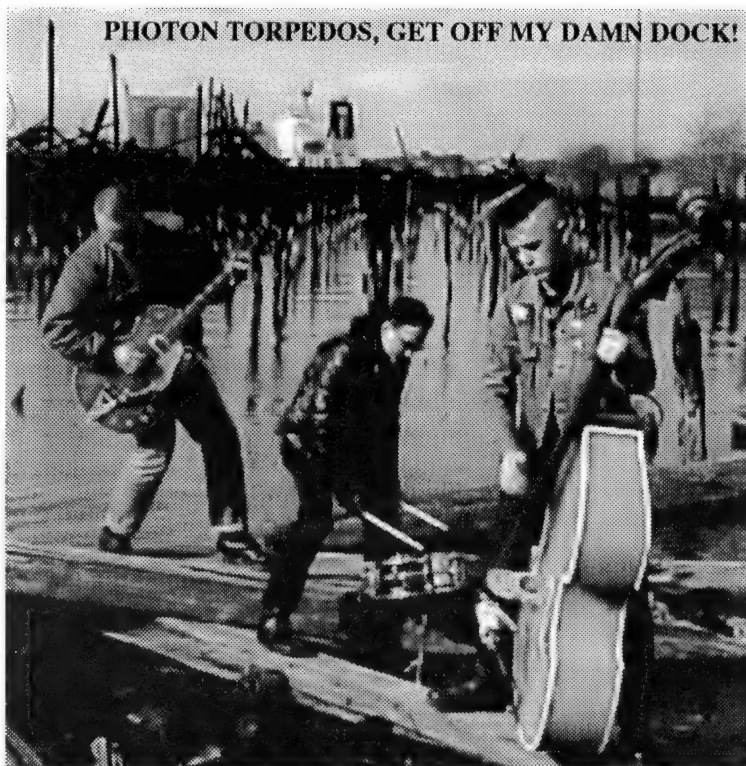
LO FIDELITY ALLSTARS **On The Floor At The Boutique** (Columbia)

Well, if you're a cut-and-paste, house-music kind of ensemble with a bit of trouble keeping members "in house," best to put things on hold for a bit and get the record company to let you issue a "mix" album. That's "mix" as in other people's music

touched up a bit and claimed somewhat as one's own as a result of fussing and musing about with sound and structure. You can do it; I can do it; we all can do it; but we're not internationally famous DJs like Lo Fidelity Allstars, so old school rappers like KRS-One and hot what-have-yous like the Jungle Brothers are not going to give us permission to put our grubby little paws on their creations. Props, however to our Allstars as their comp is less geek and more smack (new school hip lingo) as to the purloinings. Veritable booyah tear-the-roof-off-the-sucker, get-down-and-get-with-it, funk-junk sublimity. So timely and up-to-the-minute with-it that the lads throw in vintage pieces of go-go and beach music and still make it seem like some kind of contemporary.
ds

MACHINE BOWL **An Odyssey Into Electronic Dance Music** (Rhino Records)

Odyssey's the right word as any attempt at an historical overview given the genre's unwieldy nature would be neigh unto impossible. Thankfully, historian Johhan Kugelberg doesn't even try, he just throws out some names and highlights a few things and leaves it at that. As for the music, well the second disc which has the electronica and hip hop industrial and house



stuff from the likes of MARS and Prodigy is much more danceable. And better. as the first disc getting way deep into origins for some unearthly reason, contains one crap cut like "Adrenalin" by Throbbing Gristle for every sublime piece of musique like Donna Summer's "I Feel Love." Questions may arise in the purchaser's mind too as to why a dance compendium contains only truncated versions of all these (often) very long players. This stuff was designed to have you getting up, getting funky and getting sweaty and this you simply cannot do in

probably all you need to know and just about all we can tell you without making fools of ourselves attempting to describe the compositions contained therein. We could say something clever like the first cut, a twenty-two minute synthesizer and distortion excursion comprised of marvelously fashioned disquieting sound sculptures is *Metal Machine Music* by way of Baudelaire, but we won't. Or that the second piece - meditative, implausible, droning Indian modal - contains that which we'd like to hear as we lay dying, but that's even less clever. The artists here don't deserve "clever" though; they deserve your attention. Difficult as much of this is, it rewards repeated listening; it's musical for all it's seeming lack of structure and possesses a fierce, uncompromising aesthetic, rough-hewn as it may strike one at first blush. This is free with an order although pressings are limited. Write to these uncompromising folks at:
Marino@elsieandjack.com
ds

MAR/INO **The Complication Series** (Marino Records)

Nine cut compilation of experimental electronic music from a small label hailing from Michigan. That's

PHOTON TORPEDOES **It Came From Outer Space** (Raucous)

In the deepest recesses of their twisted hearts, the Boston-based

LO FIDELITY ALLSTARS: TO JAIL WITH YOU, YOU BRIT BASTARDS!



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elements of death metal and new-school hardcore, DISARRAY bring a new dimension to the millennium coin-phrase AGGRO-METAL. In addition to twelve killer cuts, DISARRAY also present the most heavy-as-balls cover of "FREEBIRD" by LYNARD SKYNYRD you will ever hear in your life! Buy this title now, because DISARRAY is about to plow through the scene like a steam roller with no brakes. Catch DISARRAY on tour from January through July, 2000.

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rockabilly trio could give two shits how true they are to the genre. Though their compositions pledge allegiance to the form, what animates them is their willful sabotage of this country-rock 'n' roll hybrid. Where most r 'n' r revivalists rest contented aping the tricks and licks of a Johnny Burnette or a Jerry Lee Lewis, Photon Torpedoes understand there is little appeal in mimicry. So the band concentrates on the absurd self-deprecation, the unbridled lasciviousness that fueled so much of the music coming out of Memphis in the 50s, exaggerating the trademark vocal mannerisms and loopy melodic lines to better fit twisted odes to Mario Bava and H.G. Lewis and histrionic celebrations of anthropophagy. Which isn't to say *It Came From Outer Space* is all fun and games; there's a subtle air of menace underlying the proceedings which lends a real creepiness to much of this. Enough to make you unsure as to whether the boys are really singing about the good kind of "eating" in "I Like My Girls Medium Rare."

PLAN A PROJECT

Spirit Of A Soldier

(Go-Kart)

Old school punk English style with a few oi and hardcore flourishes. Anthemic and rather sweet despite all the nattering about life sucking and the uselessness of butting one's head against the system, people's apathy, etc. Above all and anything is the undeniable fact that these boys can play: the twin guitar fan-faronade alone is worth the price of admission. Whoever produced this thing knew what he was doing too; the separation kicks major ass, letting the listener focus on the gutbucket swing of the skins here, the professionally urgent vocalizing there, the cri de coeur chime guitar way-over-oh-no-it-never-left-everywhere, and what's that bass thang rumbling underneath the what-have-you.

PRIMAL SCREAM

XTRMNTR

(Astral Werks)

Such a while ago. Such a long while - six years to be exact - since Primal Scream bestrode the dance floors like a Travolta rocking loud and rocking hard with their adroit mixture of r 'n' r aesthetics and acid house sounds. Not satisfied with this Bobby Gillespie reinvented himself and the band as retro rockers and drove even the feyest of the fey away. Now the Scream is back with a disc they claim is one of most "energetic and vital albums of the past twenty years." British publications have dutifully lined up behind this declaration and now the American press, lavished with a lovely press kit and an advance copy of the CD are being asked to join the rank and file. Well, the hell with that noise,

here's the inside poop: *XTRMN-TR* contains four imaginatively produced, extremely danceable bits of hard electronica, one embarrassingly lachrymose electro ballad, some fitful experiments in offshoots of the house genre and a desanguinated remix of one of the dance cuts. An interesting listen though hardly the revolution promised. ds

SCREECHING WEASEL
Thank You Very Little
 (Panic Button)

'Tis the season for career retrospectives, I guess, and Screeching Weasel throw their spiky hair into the ring with, count 'em, fifty cuts spread across two discs fat-packed with piss, vinegar, and supersnotty sprit de corps. With tracks dating back as far as 1986, disc one contains the studio work. so's the first chunk of disc two, the rest of which is given over to a complete live show from '93. Face it, as long as you're a pop-punk band that knows three

chords and can count to four really fast, over and over again, all that matters is your world view. And one quick perusal of the titles here shows why seeing the world through Weasels' eyes is a beautiful and hilarious thing: "I Hate Old Folks," "Jeannie's Got A Problem With Her Uterus," "Amy Saw Me Looking At Her Boobs," "I Was A High School Psychopath," "Eine Kleine Scheissmusic." And just for more laughs, there's a cover of "Your Are My Sunshine" that's almost everything you'd want it to be. Yeah, I know they hate old folks, but just the same, I hope these guys are still around when I'm eighty. bh

SKULL KONTROL
Zzzzz
 (Touch and Go)

Behold! the second (and now posthumous) ep by 1999's Great White Postpunk Hope, who, gauging by the tone of their press release, are packing up their toys and going home. Or at

SKULL KONTROL



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least back to the garage. Which is too bad, because they cram more sneering aggro energy into fifteen and one-half minutes than most bands manage in a whole thirty-eight, with guitar and drums locked in a Death Race 2000 pile-up to see who can be first to get to each song's finish line, and dual male-female vocals that recall Andi Sex Gang played at two different speeds. Farewell, Skull Kontrol . . . we hardly knew ye.
bh

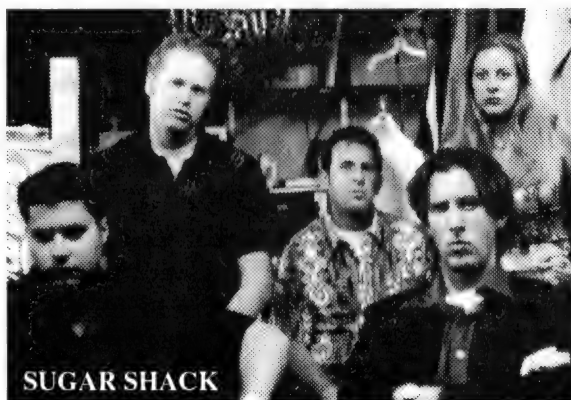
SUGAR SHACK **Get Out Of My World** (Estrus)

This is fucked up, daddy! We got one Mark Lockridge singing like he's ready to spit up a lung and a four piece behind him playing as if tomorrow has just come and told all and sundry that there would be no fucking tomorrow! Dig, too, the way the twin sludge guitar attack allows one or t'other to peel off and just wail, baby! Which wouldn't mean Bo Diddly if things weren't played in just the right poco allegro and the chords weren't just the right ones to follow each other and struck with just the right abandon . . . It's el supremo garage rock played by a combo who, if they didn't write the book, memorized the one written by whoever done did. Ten years and God knows how many albums on and they have yet to find a peer. The sound of God as child, children.
ds

VARIOUS ARTISTS **Capitol Radio** (Capitol Radio Records)

So you're in Washington, D.C. - vocation or vacation, it doesn't matter - minding your own business and trying to avoid flying presidential semen when instead you're caught in the crossfire of two rival crack gangs warring it out for the rights to sell to Marion Barry. A stray salvo from an Uzi turns your car engine into scrap iron. Might as well hunker down in the floorboard, crank the radio, and make yourself comfortable,
50

right? Odds are if it's post-midnight on a Saturday, you'll want to tune in DC's own WJFK radio (106.7 on your FM dial) for their weekly "Capitol Radio" show devoted to all that is punk and underground, because if you've learned just one thing from the movies, it's that it's always better to die with a great soundtrack than without. Or you can avoid all that and just pick up this CD: sort of a highlights' platter from a year's worth of shows containing a very generous twenty-one



songs. The best known contributors are UK Subs (weighing in with what else, "Rebel Radio"), Squatweiler, plus an oddball sore-thumb reggae track from Pietasters. To further simulate the virtual radio experience, station bumpers are sandwiched between each three-song cluster, and transitions between tracks have been cut down to . . . well, nothing. The final ten minutes are particularly priceless, comprised as they are of rapid-fire montage musician interview excerpts and listener call-ins (complete with requisite caller

abuse) and, inexplicably, a reading by crime novelist George Pelecanos. It's all that's best about D.C., minus those annoying politicians. (Capitol Radio Records, Box 229, Arlington, VA 22210)
bh

VARIOUS **Plastic Compilation Vol. 3** (Network)

Let us go then you and I, to the hip kingdom in some executive's eye. Let us play and gambol while the fools waste their money and talke in economic fables. Abscond with serious artistes like Beth Orton and Sarah McLachlan and force them to transmogrify vague poetic folksiness into muttered cloudy disco Gothic madness. Danceable by virtue of absurd pledge to melody. Irresistible by virtue of commitment to something

beyond ourselves. Beauty wrestling with inconsequentiality. Madness giving lip service to stereo effects.
ds

VARIOUS ARTISTS **Music For The Zydeco Kingdom** (Rounder)

So the compiler, hastily assembling for accompaniment to his unread, *The Kingdom of Zydeco*, hedges all bets by informing all and sundry herein that this is to be both party mix and historical

overview. Yes, "an introduction to zydeco and a chance for long-time fans to rediscover their favorites." Nothing like taking a long walk out on a thin limb, eh? Especially when you have about seventy years to draw on. So it's a win win situation for the purchaser and the seller what with nineteen selections featuring greats in any genre like Rockin' Dopsie, Buckwheat Zydeco, Beau Jocque, et al. Perhaps not the Loose-e-anna swamp album to beat all swamp albums but then how the hell would you know? Here's a point of reference: it beats the bejesus out of the soundtrack to that Walter Hill nation-guard-in-the-bayou movie of a few years back. You know, the one where Keith Carradine and Powers Boothe were the only survivors. Ah hah, it's all coming back to you, now. OK, remember how fine and primitive the music was? Ah ha, well this cuts that by miles and miles.
ds

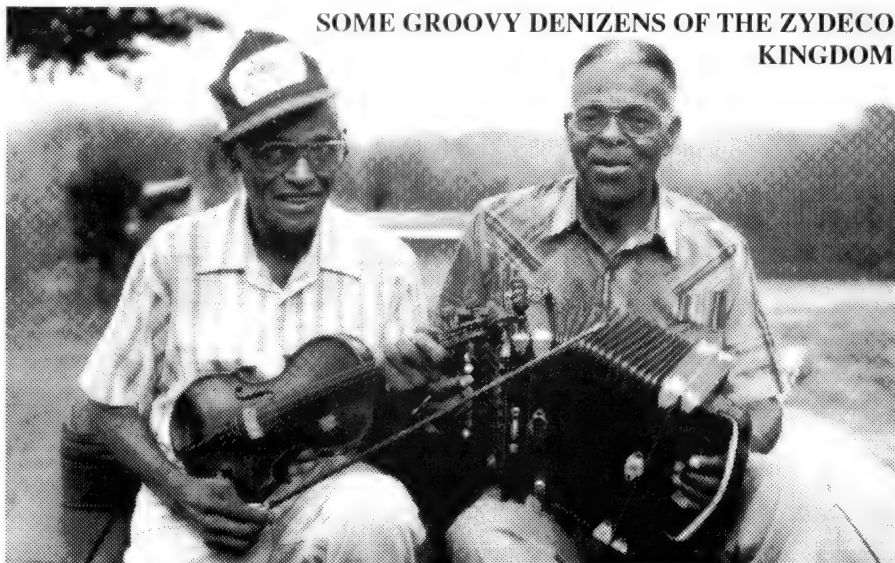
VARIOUS **New Coat of Paint - Songs of Tom Waits** (Manifesto)

Fucking shit! Incredible cd. Get it. GET IT NOW! Tom Waits' lyrics in all their psychotic splendor, done by a host of cracker-jack people. About the only way I can properly describe this thing is to compare it to drinking a bottle of good whiskey. That first drag comes on like an electric jolt, and after that, things start getting nice and smooth, and then later on it just sorta eases down into the couch and stares out through the window, watching the traffic and street people drifting by.

At no point does any of this stuff fail to deliver. The first track by Screamin' Jay Hawkins is one of those deals that would well and truly justify the purchase of the whole cd. That everything else which follows is also damn good, is just icing on the cake.

Did I say get this

SOME GROOVY DENIZENS OF THE ZYDECO KINGDOM



thing?
GET IT!
jm

VARIOUS
Hot Rods & Custom Classics
(Rhino)

Four discs of songs about hot cars and custom cruisers kicked off by Ronnie Dee (Dawson) and running high speed till Dave Dudley and the Flying Burrito Brothers get us the checkered flag. It's not all white boys with muscle cars and Hispanic-Americans with low riders though, there's Sonny Boy Williamson and Golden Earring and The Ramones and Nelson Riddle - eighty cuts in all and hardly a clunker in the bunch. Plus a profusely illustrated booklet chronicling the hot rod phenomenon, a catalog with oodles of MoPar, air-brush, Ed-Big-Daddy-Roth-type art and Robt.-Williams geegaws for sale, a baby-doll keychain and a pair of fuzzy dice to hang on the rear view. It don't get much better than this, Daddy-O! And it's

priced to drive right out of the showroom.
ds

WATTS
Watts
(Estrus)

We've spent months trying to write about this disc. Not because we don't think it's the most. No! Not at all! We just haven't been able to figure out why Estrus record honcho Davie Crider broke up the epochal Mono Men to front a band that sounds pretty much like his old one. Well, not quite like the old one as this sounds better. Like they mean it. Like this could be the last time. For everything. Louder. Nastier. Heavier. Like Mescal has replaced the chic imported beer. Like we've moved East: from Sonics territory to Stooges and Blue Cheer turf. Ur-punk with a subtle sense of dynamics and a lead singer conveying urgency bordering, but just skirting, desperation. Melodies mine late-60s garage territory but they're tricked out



with mind-bending fuzz-guitar solos, call-to-arms harmonies, incidental feedback and a mix which plays up the strengths of the rhythm section.
ds

ANDRE WILLIAMS
The Black Godfather
(In The Red)

Unrepentant alcoholic, 'ho-chaser, and cadger of drinks, Andre Williams (Brutarian was set to do an interview with the living legend until we heard that he expected to be feted with top rail stuff until he fell over or died), returns after his brief foray in the c&w field, with a nasty dose of r&r and r&b he's calling, *The Black Godfather*. Nasty is the operative term here, and in case you don't get it, Andre splashes his girlfriend's ass crack all over the disc and jewel box insert. Helped by members of Jon Spencer's Blues Explosion as well as the Cheater Slicks, Andre's stutters, moans and screams his way thru thirteen deranged, danceable ditties. Check it out and see why not less an authority than Lux Interior claims that Mr. Williams makes Little Richard look like Pat Boone in comparison.
ds

-B

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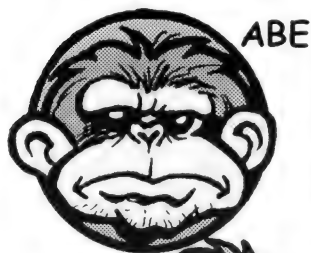
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THE THINKING APE BLUES by Mark Poutenis

STARRING THE
PROGRESS
BROS.



ABE

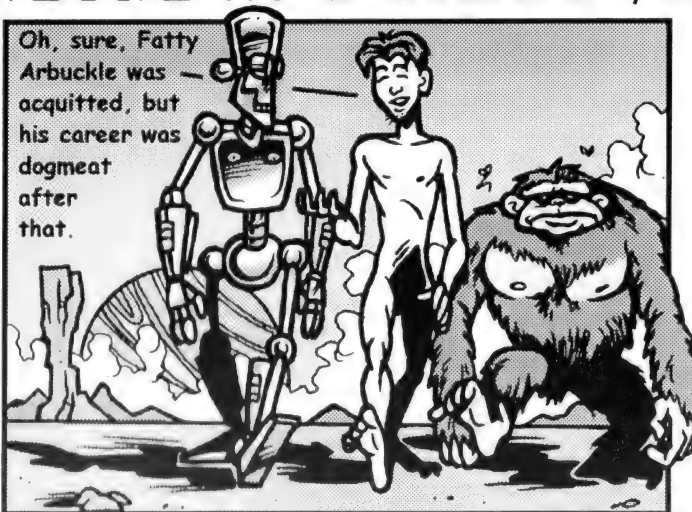


BEN



CARL

Oh, sure, Fatty Arbuckle was acquitted, but his career was dogmeat after that.



Oh, check it out, it's Harmony Divine and her "Lemonade Stand".

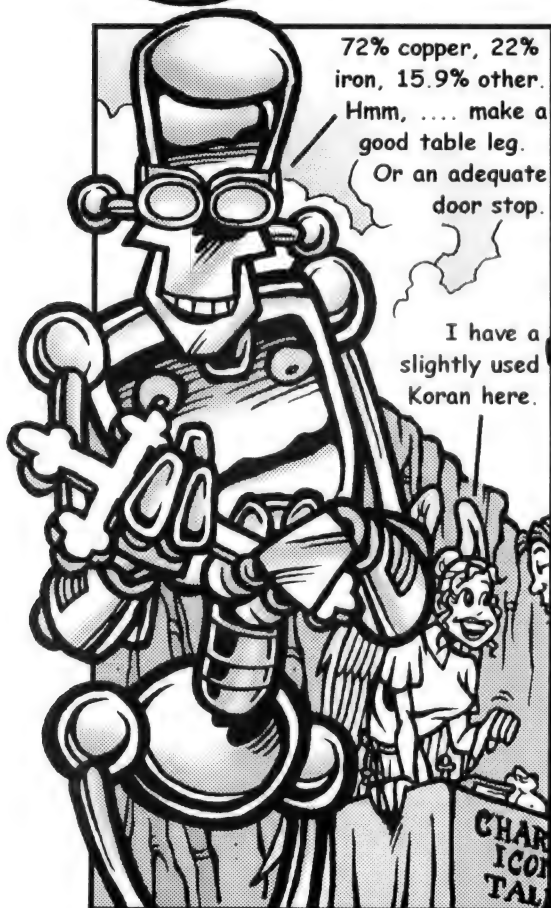


Hi boys! How are ya t'day? Good? Can I interest you in a nice crucifix? How 'bout a rosary?



72% copper, 22% iron, 15.9% other. Hmm, ... make a good table leg. Or an adequate door stop.

I have a slightly used Koran here.



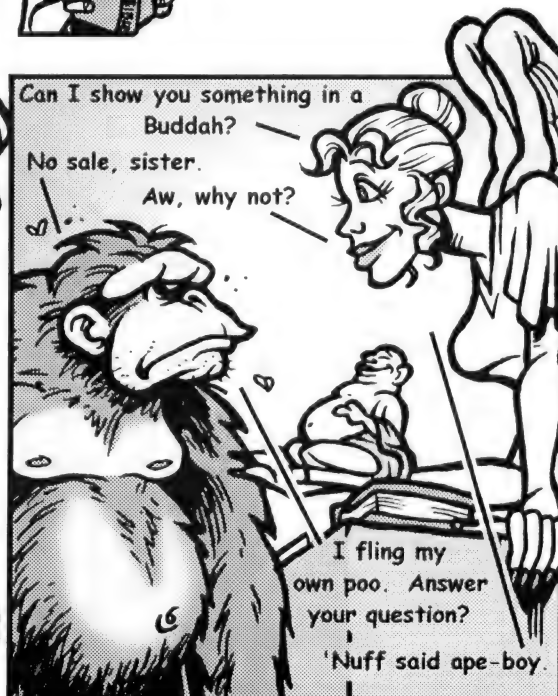
Whadda I have to do to get you into a Torah?



Hey guys!!! Check this out! This "Old Testament" thing explains everything!! The heavens! The oceans! My unclean urges... ...waitaminute... what th' hell?



Can I show you something in a Buddah? No sale, sister. Aw, why not?

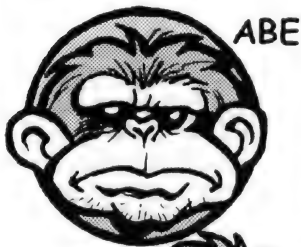


I fling my own poo. Answer your question? 'Nuff said ape-boy.

—END—

THE THINKING APE BLUES by Mark Poutenis

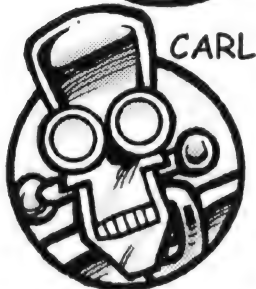
STARRING THE
PROGRESS
BROS.



ABE



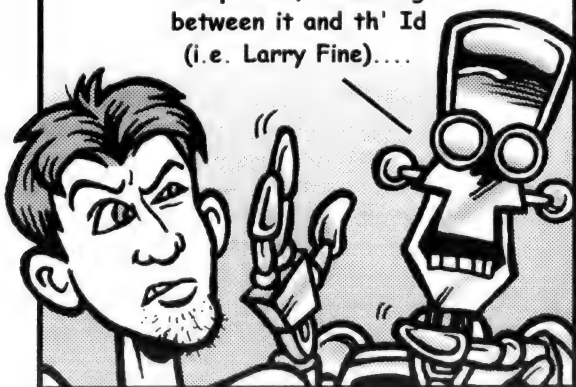
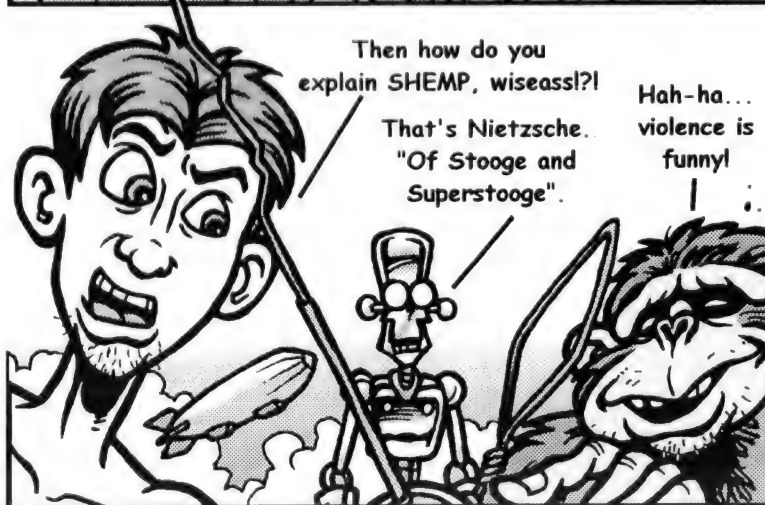
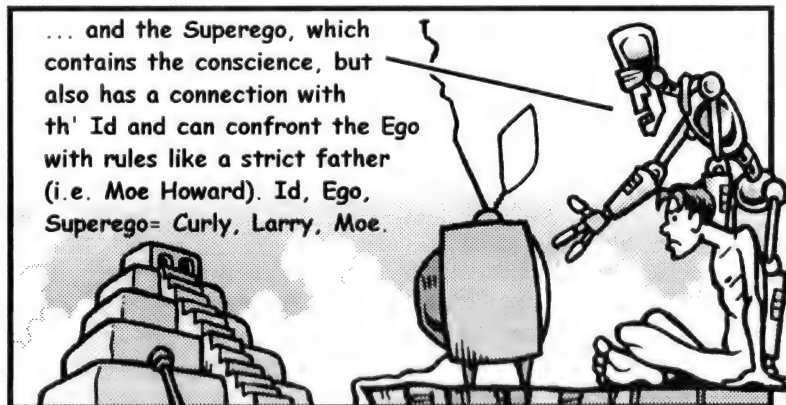
BEN



CARL



In the Freudian model, Sigmund Freud established a tripartite structure of the mind, consisting of the Id, Ego and the Superego. The Id contains all instinctual drives seeking immediate satisfaction (i.e. Curly Howard). The Ego deals with the real world outside the person, mediating between it and th' Id (i.e. Larry Fine)....



—END—

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BRUTARIAN Library



Danny Hellman

CAPTURED BY ALIENS

Joel Achenbach

(1999) Simon & Schuster

In which an award-winning Washington Post staffer goes searching for intelligent life in the universe and doesn't find it anywhere. Finding intelligence among the believers in extraterrestrials is also problematic for Achenbach but find them he does in the persons of Carl Sagan, the polymath who unlocked the secrets of the cosmos for the hoi polloi, Dan Goldin, the no-nonsense chief of NASA and a visionary genius and former lounge singer named Henry Harris. With the help of these men, and a few others, a book about the possibility of life on other planets becomes a kind of loving, humorous metaphysical inquiry into life, mythology, intelligence, compassion, the scientific method, religion, metaphysics, and all that which mixes and muddles up the bete humain. Along the way, while having many complex scientific principles explained to us, we learn the truth about life on Mars, weigh the conflicting evidence surrounding UFOs and Roswell and wrestle with the Von "Chariots of the Gods" Daniken anomaly, i.e., The Hungarian has the proof but he, alas, cannot be here to explain it to you as he is dead.
dom salemi

FREEZER BURN

Joe R. Lansdale

(2000) Mysterious Press

Words fail to adequately describe Bill Roberts the putative protagonist of *Freezer Burn* but let's let down-home comic writer, Joe R. Lansdale have a go: "[Bill] was not only stupid, he was a loser. Everywhere he turned he was socked with the mallet of stupidity, kicked in the balls by fate, given a dunce hat and the finger." Hard to feel sorry, though, for a twenty-something letting his dead mom rot in her bedroom while he figures out what to do with her uncashed social security checks. Unable to master her signature and with the stink becoming too much, Bill, with the help of a few mentally challenged friends, comes up with a less than brilliant plan to knock off a fireworks stand across the highway from his house. (We did say something about Bill not being too terribly bright, didn't we?) Naturally, the wannabe felons botch the job and Bill, a cop hot on his heels, skedaddles into a local swamp. Emerging some twenty-four hours later, dehydrated, starving, face a purple swollen mess thanks to thousands of mosquito bites, our hero lurches smack dab into a traveling freak show and its kindly, fiftyish impresario. Quickly disabused of the notion that Bill is a natural oddity, the attraction's owner nevertheless allows him to stay working as a kind of fringe attraction



and later, after they bond and the swelling begins to go down, as a "normal" toiling as a factotum. Bill doesn't mind; because his new found employer has a wife. A curvaceous, young blonde wife. Who looks like she's ready, more than ready, for a change. Yeah, we're in James M. Cain territory here but with more laughs than a barrel full of monkeys, a cast of unforgettable and touching grotesques and, and, oh yes, Jesus Christ in a freezer. dom salemi

CULT FICTION -

A Reader's Guide

Andrew Calcutt & Richard Shephard
(1999) Contemporary Books

At the margins, the truth lies. To get there one moves as through a glass darkly into a world of perpetual solitude. Here we find the nonsensical as commonplace. Here, the deviant as anti-hero, the empty gesture as life affirming philosophy. In prose often as shabby as a Bowery Bum's cloth coat. Or, at times, so lambent, so lovingly crafted you feel as if you are reading for the very first time. The list of authors gracing this guide may not be everyone's cup of tea but take a cursory glance - Acker, Gaddis, Thompson, O'Connor - they're all here; including many of whom you have heard little, if anything: Rudolph Wurlitzer, Martin Millar, Luke Rhinehart. The successful and the failed, the lauded and the ignored. Almost two hundred and fifty brief listings summarizing the authors lives, highlighting their obsessions and preoccupations, each entry cunningly filigreed with witticisms, criticisms and anecdotes. Cunning too, the almost laconic brilliance of the original or found assessments. Jim Thompson's oeuvre: "A moral wasteland without a safe place from which to view it." James M. Cain as dismissed by Chandler: "A Proust in greasy overalls, a dirty little boy with a piece of chalk and a board fence and nobody watching." dom salemi

THE DECADENT READER

ed. Asti Hustvedt

(1998) Zone Books

The Decadent Reader, a hefty anthology weighing in at over 1,000 pages, is a must for aspiring Francophiles. This voluminous enterprise aims to please the hard-core intellectual and the polymorphous reader by serving up a stylish selection of naughty texts accompanied by healthy doses of literary criticism. The anthology, edited by

Asti Hustvedt, offers translated works by, among other, Jules Barbey d'Aureville, Rachilde, J.K. Huysman, Jean Moreas, Guy de Maupassant, and Jean Lorrain - writers who earned their fin-de-siecle reputations as decadents by ridiculing France's moral majority and its cherished institutions: church, state, and family.

Since the anthology's material has languished for most of a century, the interpolation of Crit. and Lit. provides the uninitiated with the necessary historical background, but it also reminds us that we need to work for our pleasures. Some of this labor comes from the baroque concepts that are the crowning glory of French theory, which, like a gaudy jewel, alienates folks who value straight talk. But straight talk, or the lack thereof, is precisely the point: decadents don't talk straight. If we are going to appreciate their excesses, provocations, and formidable taste in clothing and decor, then we need to understand that their queer talk is a special kind of language.

The decadents worshipped artificiality; they cultivated the aristocratic, anti-naturalistic style described by Verlaine as "all glistening with purple." In Maupassant's "A Divorce Case," for example, the lawyer argues that his client's safety is in danger because her husband suffers from "poetic madness," a reference no doubt to Plato who famously wrote about the deleterious effects of bad poetry. Introducing the husband's diary into evidence, counsel proceeds to read a selection of memorable ravings: "Oh! flesh, seductive living dun, walking putrefaction, a mass that thinks, speaks, looks, and smiles, full of fermenting food, rosy, pretty, tempting, deceitful as is the soul..." This ode to excrement is Maupassant's delicate way of saying that we are all full of crap, but it is also typical of the decadents' horror of

vulgarity. Although they celebrated every form of moral corruption, they never engaged in coarse language, which made them the unrivaled masters of euphemism in their day.

For some, *Decadence* might prove tough going, but I personally like an occasional reprieve from the hard-boiled posturing of 20th fin-de-siecle sex and crime stories. In fact, the flamboyant prose of Huysmans and friends generated considerable scandal in part because, as Francoise Meltzer points out, they were objects of bourgeois homophobia. Many of them, including those who did not come from aristocracy, took considerable pleasure in emulating the education, values, and sexual proclivities of blue-blooded libertines. Barbey, whose texts read like treatises on dandyism, "would spend hours each day on his appearance, elaborately styling, and later dyeing his hair and applying makeup." Lorrain was a follower of the literary Satanists who liked to wear perfume and paint his nails. Moreas was "known to be arrogant and vain, a dandy who would dress only in white, with the exception of brightly colored ties."

Because dandyism was class specific, sexual transgression represented an unorthodox attack on the idea that political and social change equaled progress. "But we are no longer masters in our own homes," laments the dying Comtesse de Savigny in Barbey's "Happiness in Crime." Her melancholy speech sums up the decadent position that the aristocracy was in every way





superior to the bourgeoisie, who might have money but no breeding or sense of style.

Female dandyism, on the other hand, was less common and more disrespectful of the old hierarchies, which may explain why Janet Beizer has such difficulty positioning Rachilde in her maddeningly coy introduction to *Monsieur Venus*. Thankfully, the anthology contains short but useful biographies on each of the writers. Marguerite Eymery or Rachilde, we learn, was an only child who earned her father's affection by trying to make him forget that she was a girl. She grew up riding, hunting and secretly reading Sade in the family library. At twenty-one, she moved to Paris, where she convinced the police to let her appear in public dressed as a man. She became increasingly disillusioned in her old age and reputedly cared more for her pet rats than her family and friends. A self-professed anti-feminist, Rachilde resented the burden of bearing children. In "Monsieur Venus" she writes: "I represent the elite of women of our time. A combination of the feminine artist and the feminine great lady, one of those women

who revolt at the idea of carrying on a weak race, or of giving a pleasure they don't share."

Strangely, the life and crimes of Rachilde's literary mentor do not figure largely in *The Decadent Reader*. The Marquis de Sade, who penned the most irreverent, salacious and tedious works ever banned by mankind, deserves more than a passing mention since there isn't a decadent who doesn't owe him a huge debt: the theatricality of closeted spaces, the props and fetishism, the declaration of erotic rights are expressly Sadian. To learn more about the Divine Marquis, I recommend Francine du Plessix Gray's *At Home with the Marquis de Sade*, though the more encyclopedic *A History of Private Life*, edited by Michelle Perrot, also gets the job done.

Sade teaches us something essential about sex, which is that we never get tired of talking about it. The decadents were more than willing to keep the discourse going. As Michel Foucault would say, they wrote some of history's greatest "sexual sermons:" denouncing the status quo,

chastising hypocrisy, and castigating prudishness. If we no longer question the centrality of sex in our lives, its power and influence over our personal fulfillment, we need only to read the decadents to find out why.

kathryn a. kopple

RUN

Douglas E. Winter
(2000) Knopf

If you already know of Douglas Winter, and his multi-varied contributions to the horror field as critic, anthologist, author of short stories and nonfiction books, and all-around conscience, then you know that this is one first novel that feels as long-overdue as the *Second Coming*. If

you don't know him, just strap in for some primo crime fiction. Either way, though, you have to hand it to him as a writer of integrity. Given Winter's years of high-stakes law practice — in Washington, D.C., no less — there can't NOT have been pressure on him to go the obvious route, and churn out a big fat cinder block of a legal thriller that would've knocked John Grisham on his ass. Fortunately, at least for those of us who are apt to look upon that sort of thing with a mighty yawn, Winter took the path of greater resistance and....well....stuck to his guns.

It's our national relationship WITH guns that is at the core of *Run*: How we love them in entertainment. How we love and fear them in real life. How our rights to stockpile and fondle them are constitutionally guaranteed. And, most of all, how the clandestine trafficking of them comprises a savage underground economy unto itself. "You should know right now, if you haven't figured it out yet, that I'm not the good guy," gunrunner Burdon Lane tells us point blank early in the novel. On a relative scale, though, he's just about the closest thing to it in the treacherous moral landscape that Winter describes, standing at the crossroads where firearms, big money, and hidden political agendas meet. Everybody's a viper here, and frequently pretending to be something or someone else.

Except for a few days' worth of set-up, the bulk of *Run* follows the course of one extraordinarily long and violent day in the life of Burdon Lane, as he oversees the transportation and sale of an arsenal to a New York City street gang, while using yet another crew of gangstas for additional security. But when the deal skews sideways and goes wrong, it does so on such an epic (yet flawlessly planned and executed) scale that, well, you know you wouldn't be seeing anything else on CNN for the next week or two.

Throughout, Winter walks a fine line and succeeds in having it both ways: To be sure, he indulges our fascination with weaponry, the world of the criminals who profit from it, and the sheer damage potential. Guns are described to the point of fetishism, and it's not without mordant humor at times; one particularly scary head-case even has names for his favored pieces (the .44 Magnum is Elvis, a matched set of pistols is Siegfried and Roy). Yet the novel is too smart, cynical, and socially aware to be mistaken for whacking material for *Guns & Ammo's* lifetime subscribers. It's

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also a thought-provoking broadside indictment of a culture that has allowed mass slaughter and assassinations to become pandemic — even expected now, as the price for Second Amendment freedom — and the institutionalized racism that creates its own worst nightmares in the form of inner city armies with nothing to lose but their own undervalued lives.

First and foremost, though, Winter has fashioned a crime drama as hard-boiled as an iron ingot, with a narrative that is the logical heir to the likes of Jim Thompson and Richard Stark, updated with a hyper cinematic sensibility. *Run* builds to an extended climax that's the most operatic free-for-all shoot-out seen in any medium since John Woo's own *Hard-Boiled*.

Along the way, a few things do become necessary sacrifices. While everyone from gunrunners to gangstas to federal agents to shadow government spooks rings true enough in their roles, the breakneck pace doesn't allow for much depth of character, save for Lane...but then most of them end up six feet under anyway. As well, the cast is almost exclusively a boys' club, with female perspectives all but missing.

Minor carping, that. The astute reader will likely be too busy hanging on to notice, and clearly *Run* was never intended to be all things to all people. What it IS is a powerhouse debut for Doug Winter as a novelist, and more than reason enough to hope that from now on he spends maybe one day a week less at the law office.

brian hodge

THE BUST GUIDE TO THE NEW GIRL ORDER

eds. Marcelle Karp & Debbie Stoller
(1999) Penguin Books

Damn. I have very mixed feelings about *The Bust Guide*. I want to say, Yeah, it's great. Go out and buy it. Read it to your daughters, your sons, your boyfriends, your husbands. But I have these nagging reservations. The PR hype claims: "In *Bust* we've captured the voice of a brave new girl: one that is raw and real, straightforward and sarcastic, smart and silly... an in-your-face, grrl-power attitude... funky neo-feminist manifesto." I'm afraid some of those Pulitzer-class accolades the editors heap on themselves are unearned, or at least a bit premature. The magazine claims to be the antidote to all those women's mags that focus on mass culture and make girls feel bad about their bodies and comparing themselves to celebrities. You know, the ones that obsess

about body shape, clothing, makeup, etc. Well, guess what. *Bust* also focuses on popular culture, television, and glitzy celebrities, to the exclusion of much else, so that the effect is nearly the same. *Cosmo* with a fouler mouth. *Glamour* with a dash of menstrual blood.

It is fun at times, but not all that shocking. The quality of the writing varies from professional to not-ready-for-college-workshop. Plentiful F-words can't make up for lack of skill or content. A few essays (like "Tie me up, Tie Me off" by Scarlett Fever, about the irreversible choice at an early age to not have children, ever, due to soul searching about personal shortcomings) are truly brave and out there and affecting. Others are not. Like "Media Whores" by Debbie Stoller — a *Cosmo* overview in disguise. And some essays seem nonsensical or symptomatic of muddled thinking. One author's essay begins vividly, alluding to incest or molestation in "The World Moves;" it recreates the terror of "listening to creaking boards. Too much time lying very still, deciphering footsteps..." Then, the closing paragraph negates the whole premise: "I

remember but do not grieve my wounds. I believe that if they existed, they have healed... I never changed." Um, excuse me. Then what was the whole point, and why did we need to read that? A firm editorial hand is conspicuously missing sometimes.

I know that some readers, especially in the 18 to 25 range, are going to insist, Oh yeah, This is great stuff. That's because it's slangy and familiar; no harder to digest than an MTV video. I guess I'll just have to feel mean spirited and out of it, and not agree. A dirty job, but somebody's got to do it. The reason *Bust* appeals so quickly and broadly to the general

population is that it's the Grrrls version of *Seventeen* and *Cosmo* rolled into one. It doesn't force the reader to engage the brain, to bother to think beyond the breezy surface — just like those glossy women's mags it reviles. *Bust* claims to be iconoclastic, yet it gushes — and I mean really GUSHES — over body-obsessed celebs like Courtney Love and Madonna the same way *Glamour* and *Vogue* and *Good Housekeeping* gush about Kate Moss and Gwyneth Paltrow and (ugh) Kathy Lee Gifford. So what's the big diff, that they throw in Rosie O'Donnell and Roseanne as their Token Fat Women?

And if the *Bust* bunch is so daring and open and in your face, why do they resort so often to cutesy euphemisms like "Hoo-ha" for orgasm? Can't we, girls, even now in the 21st Century, just SAY IT? And Whywhywhy must they write so breathlessly, in cliched pre-digested bursts — even if they are peppered with obscenities — like Helen Gurley Brown with PMS? Come on, it takes no imagination or skill to type "cunt" and "fuck." A little profanity can't make up for specious reasoning and circular arguments.

For example, "Media Whores" by Debbie Stoller bemoans the fact that while

ROTTEN COTTON

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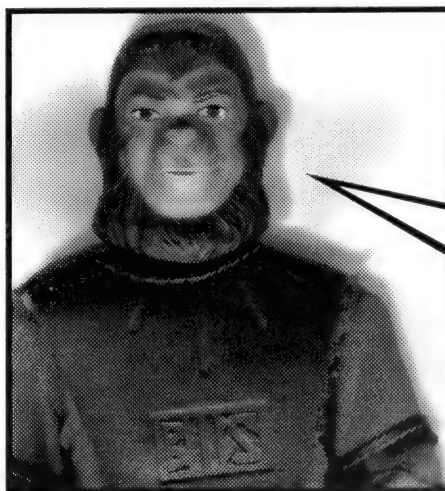
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women have been patterning themselves after "Audrey Hepburn, Bette Davis, Lucille Ball, Pam Grier, Chrissie Hynde, Tina Turner, and Joan Jett," men have all these great heroes and role models to look up to. "With Lincoln, Kennedy, Plato and Nero, Einstein and Schweitzer to look up to, how much excitement can one really muster up for the Fonz?" Well darn, how unfair. Poor little us. But, gosh. Isn't there something a teensy wrong with that reasoning? Like, Go to Hell, Margaret Sanger, Marie Curie, George Sand, George Eliot, Joan of Arc, Babe Didrickson, Golda Meir, The Joyner sisters, Catherine the Great. And any other women artists, scientists, athletes, philosophers, rulers through history who've actually tried to leave a more lasting contribution than the last sitcom actress or rock diva.

I suppose Madonna and Courtney do have nicer clothes.

I understand that the *Bust* editors have a laudable mission: they're trying to instill the idea of self-esteem in young women by sharing life experiences. But here it becomes just one more surface treatment, another television-like insistence that to be funny and entertaining, you also have to be (mostly) shallow and vapid. If *Bust* is trying to show that women are as smart and capable as men, they need to rethink their total too-cutesy presentation on mostly the same catty old topics. Think real hard, girls. You can do it.

So, with the exception of a few truly bold, stark and beautifully expressed essays, this is really the soda pop of Feminism's Third Wave. Some of the essays are truly edgy, smart, and bold: The Museum of Menstruation, "Don'ts for Boys," (an answer to "The Rules" for girls), an honest and affecting essay on dual-lesbian motherhood, and the above mentioned "Tie Me Up, Tie Me off," for example. Then there's even an essay on dog sex; talk about your true confessions. But Stoller and Karp should forget all the "Aren't We Great; We Deserve a Pulitzer" hype and simply admit that what they are creating is more


pop culture: entertaining, sometimes engaging, but not exactly THE answer to all female kind's problems. Some of their shortcomings would be forgivable, even understandable, in a crudely produced zine, which is how *Bust* started. But not in anthology form from a major publishing house.

At best *Bust* is a fun, bitchy kvetch session for mostly middle class, mostly white (sub)urban women. Fine, if that's what you're looking for. Then go — buy it. Read it. With my blessing. If taken in small doses, it's funny and briefly cathartic. Don't read the whole thing in a long sitting, though. Sample like gooey chocolates, or you may get slightly ill. It's fun, it's feel-good, an almost no-brainer. *Bust* has its place, as long as you don't expect much substance. It's Feminism Lite.
lenore hart

GOTHIC:
400 Years of Excess, Horror, Evil & Ruin
by Richard Davenport-Hines
(1999) North Point Press

What is gothic? Picture the typical dark too-warm club full of Goth robots in their white face paint thick as cake icing writhing to heavy bass and chords in a minor key; boys and girls striving for not merely androgyny, a mix of both human sexes, but an entirely sexless creature living to absorb and to be absorbed by the world, always reactionary. Always submissive to the dark, to urges unallowable, if only because they go unprofessed, by so-called normal society.

The Goths of today have a long, rich history, whether most of them recognize it or not, or even believe it. But what is gothic today would not necessarily be recognized as gothic a few centuries ago. Back in the dark days of the Black Death and the Inquisition, 'gothic' meant the style of architecture used in constructing Catholic churches, monasteries, castles and dungeons, taking the name from the invading Scandinavian tribes who helped to topple the Roman Empire. The style went



out with the Renaissance and the advance of the Enlightenment. Logic and science replaced faith in mystical forces. Mankind was enough to save himself, so said the Enlightenment philosophers—but that belief was severely shaken by the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in 1631. The event devastated the countryside and reduced much of Naples—the second largest continental city after Paris, and the high seat of Renaissance art, power, and wealth—to smoking ruin. Here was nature at her most unpredictable and more terrible, telling the fine scholars of the Enlightenment just what she thought of them. Here was a power to be respected, and never again ignored.

The Neapolitan landscape painter Salvator Rosa was one of the first to find creative energy in the disaster. He created moody woodcuts and paintings of desolate rocky outcrops and mountain fasts crowned with withered trees, where grotesque figures capered, jabbered, and committed all manner of unseemly acts, including blasphemy, carnality and outright cannibalism. English travelers in particular found Rosa's work intriguing, perhaps because much of settled England was so, well, settled, and decidedly not wild. This newfound taste for the unwholesome came home to England, where it quickly became the newest style. First to succumb were the pretty geometries of formal gardens, which gave way to landscapes mimicking the harsh rocky swards of Rosa's art. Avant garde types of the age such as poet Alexander Pope embraced the "Gothic revival" style of gardens. William Kent actually "planted" dead trees on the grounds of Kensington Palace as part of his artistic vision. According to Davenport-Hines this was "partly a taste for the theatrically picturesque; but a sort of dramatized decay and a self-tormenting play with the fears and melancholy of the graveyard were also incorporated in it. Mountains, as the fragments of a ruined world, wrecked buildings and withered trees were all emblems of transience, scary impersonal forces and carefully cultivated melancholy."

Soon enough English lords were building great gothic structures of carved stone and mortar unlike anything seen since the Middle Ages. Gothic ambience seeped into social consciousness as well. Horace Walpole, "the harbinger of gothic fiction" as author of *The Castle of Otranto*, believed "lust for power was the most voracious and destructive of impulses." "All truths need to be balanced by their inverse," Walpole said, hence the idea of inversion as a gothic theme. Philosopher Hegel went on to spell



out the details of submission vs. dominance relationships. Though the Master must dominate the Slave, the Master is thus dependent on the Slave for his position. The Marquis de Sade also had a lot to say on the topic, though few were comfortable with letting him say it. The horror of the French Revolution gave English gothic authors still more grist for their work. Here was the ultimate inversion of society, a kingdom toppled, reduced to useless dross by the violence of an ignorant, insensitive rabble. You couldn't have asked for a better gothic metaphor of decay and despoiling than mob rule.

Writing about mobs, however, was too broad a scale. Better to personify evil within a single startling figure. Now was the time of the monster: incubi, succubi, demons, imps—all were part of gothic art, signifying threat and fear as well as the evil thoughts inside each human head which seldom were spoken of—unless you happened to embrace the gothic.

Then there were the vampires.

Vampires easily fit neatly into the gothic iconography, with the inversion of life into unlife and the power and sex play of vamps and their living thralls. Byron's disgruntled Doctor Polidori created a vamp lord named Ruthven whom he consciously modeled on Byron. (The grotty old creature probably would never have caused much stir, however, if Polidori hadn't first tried to get his story published under Byron's name.) Ruthven was the first vampire to drink English blood on English soil, but others soon immigrated into gothic books and poems, culminating in and Le Fanu's sexy female vamp Carmilla and finally Bram Stoker's Dracula.

At the same time, experiments in electricity were said to be approaching a time when man could become immortal—not by drinking blood, but through the ultimate control of nature. This was the main spur to Mary Wollstonecraft's imagination when she wrote *Frankenstein*. This was a groundbreaking novel for many reasons, not the least of which was that the author consciously used gothic elements—castles, mountains, storms—for lively symbolism rather than mere stage dressing. The book's basic themes—the abuse of power, and the revenge of the abused—fit neatly on the gothic palette. The novel also expanded the gothic "canon" by embracing the idea that horror and mystery can come from something man-made rather than natural or supernatural.

In the U.S., meanwhile, gothicism grew and turned away from nobility and broad-

scale social turmoil to the intimate, destructive power of tainted families and psyches, notably in Hawthorne and Poe as well as the celebrated "Southern Gothic" stories by folks like Faulkner and Flannery O'Connor. Who needed ghosts and exotic locales to create terror when you could find it in your own home, your family, even your own head?

For a brief moment in the early 20th century, gothicism was threatened by Freudianism, a new sort of "Enlightenment" movement which laid claim to many gothic themes and linked them scientifically to aspects of the human mind. In the end, however, those pesky goths beat the Freudian threat by absorbing it in turn. Who better could appreciate, even demonstrate, the theatricality of death-wish and schizophrenia, of sexual power plays and submission and dominance. To modern day professed goth artists like splatterpunk writer Poppy Z. Brite, director/writer David Lynch [*Blue Velvet*, *Eraserhead*], and bands like The Cure and Bauhaus, life is "a masquerade of discontinuous, improvised performances."

Inversion and negation; shadows instead of bright light; misery and sickness, death and decay instead of rosy-cheeked health; the glorification of suffering and the idea that by submitting one holds power over an oppressor...After 400 years of absorbing and reinventing, where does goth grow next? The author doesn't consider goths in cyberspace, but you can bet they're there. The biotech industry is certainly begging to be symbolized by a new *Frankenstein*. On the other hand, mainstream literature has turned a mirror on itself to produce a flock of self-revelatory, self-flagellatory "memoirs" which might as well be gothic fiction for all their theatricality and melodrama; satires of the very things they want us to take seriously. Proof enough that gothicism is on the move again, because whatever else it wants, it does not ever want to be mainstream.

charlene brusso



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GETTING NAKED WITH HARRY CREWS

ed by Erik Bledsoe

(2000) University Press of Florida

One of our greatest, and wildest, men of letters gets down to it, expostulating on drinking, fighting, loving and, of course, writing, in a number of interviews given over the last three decades. Arranged chronologically by the date of the tête-à-tête, the collection has been cleverly compiled and edited so as to resemble a dramatic monologue. A really good monologue with a garrulous, brilliant, poetic and at times repulsive character at its center. Act One - The 70s, early find Crews comfortable and ascendant discoursing on his work, his literary influences and the writer's trade. The interviews from the 80s are a strange and savage ride into the darker parts of the man's psyche - the fascination with violence, the lifelong love affair with alcohol, the need to rub against potentially crippling psychological and emotional experiences so that "honest" writing can emerge. Surprisingly, Crews, in the final section, emerges battered but strangely whole not someone who has come through exactly but who knows how to get there from where he may be at any given moment. Drunk or sober.

dom salemi

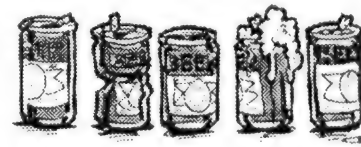


Mr. Fide doesn't have much to say this issue other than it's nice to see the major studios returning to the idiocy of yesterday. What He means is, is it Ozzy's imagination or are we seeing a lot more horror flicks and exploitation released in the theaters than in previous years? Maybe it's the alcohol and lack of a home life but Oz found himself in the multiplexes more times in the last couple of weeks than the last three years put together. So for the foreseeable future look for more reviews of genre releases - save for action/adventure pictures which have become so formulaic as to be beneath contempt - from the pen of Ozzy Fide. We'll try to throw in critiques of video premieres of noteworthy obscurities but these are becoming more and more difficult to find as even video specialty stores are clearing shelf space of the more esoteric material for DVD rentals. Soon, very soon, ALL movie rental concerns will be interchangeable and classic and cult flicks will be a thing of the past. Oz's advice, you see a Liquid Sky or a Citizen Kane in the bargain sale bin at Blockbuster, you buy it because it could be a long time before you see either motion picture again. Read on, what follows is important . . .



NEVERWHERE

Neil Gaiman is probably an unfamiliar name to you. Unless you're the type who likes to hang out at fantasy book stores arguing the merits of the latest role playing games. Or debating whether Space Ghost has become passé. Or plotting how you're going to wow them with your Magneto costume at the next World Con Sci-Fi Convention. Basically, unless you're the man-child Art Director of this rag. All of which are fine and dandy, but since you're reading Brutarian you're probably not going to know that this Gaiman guy is a 39 year old British writer who's something of a wunderkind in the comic book world thanks to the *Sandman* series he created in collaboration with illustrator Dave McKean. Last year he teamed up with the BBC and Jim Henson productions to produce a mini series based on his first novel, *Neverwhere*. While Oz sources tell him the three hour plus adaptation was a flop, Mr. Fide recently attended a private screening, i.e. he sat alone in front of his television, and was wowed. Not by the story which posits the London underground and sewers as a gateway to a medieval-styled alternate universe - but by the fabulous cast of characters and the production design. Dark angels, lamias, vicious sadists, beautiful warriors moving in, out and around sets too fantastic for words. This is a trip you need to take, just make sure you have three hours to kill, because once you pop in the tape you're going to be glued to your set and nothing, save the need to refill the bowl or pop another beer, is going to have you getting up.



PITCH BLACK

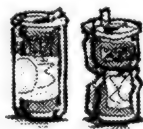
Oz can't remember the last time he saw a good science fiction movie (*Star Wars* doesn't count as that's for little more than a filmed toy catalog) or a good monster flick and as this was supposed to be a combination of the two He didn't hold out much hope. Still, this combination of *Lawrence of Arabia* and *Alien*, despite its excellent cinematography and disturbing pterodactyl-like creatures was pretty dull. Craft crash-lands on a desert planet with an assortment of people including a serial killer. An inordinate amount of time is spent bickering and trudging through sand until it gets dark. Then the wingy-thingys come out and start eating people. Even when they run

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back to the space ship. Ho-hum, you've seen this, what? four times already in the *Alien* series? No nudity, little graphic violence for a film of this kind and dialogue so uninvolved it had Ozzy cursing himself for having snuck out of the office to catch this bit of hackwork at a matinee. Props must go to the filmmakers however for killing off most of the children and for dressing Sigourney Weaver clone, Radha Mitchell, in tight rubber suits.



THESIS

Let's pretend you've never seen a Hitchcock movie. Ok, ok, that's next to impossible, how about, then, finding it in your heart to forgive this Spanish film's obsessions with Lord Alfred and hunkering down and getting into a fairly engrossing tale of a beautiful graduate student's attempts to learn the identities of the architects of a snuff flick which has accidentally fallen into her shapely hands. Of course, either you or Oz would have immediately dropped the vile video into the hands of your local constable (after mak-

ing a number of copies for our friends) but then there would have been no movie. So stretching credulity to the breaking point, our luscious heroine puts on her deerstalker cap and seeks to solve the mystery her ownself. Before she's done, a couple of innocents join the choir invisible, the university is turned upside down and sleep murdered for the viewer. Though there's not much grue and virtually no nudity, we're bestowed a literate script graced with red herrings, clever dialogue and ingenious plotting. Along the way a fair amount of suspense is generated thanks to our heroine falling in lust with one of the prime

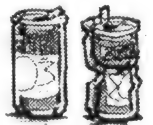
suspects and enlisting the aid of a fellow grad who makes your average gorehound look like a choirboy by comparison.



READY TO RUMBLE

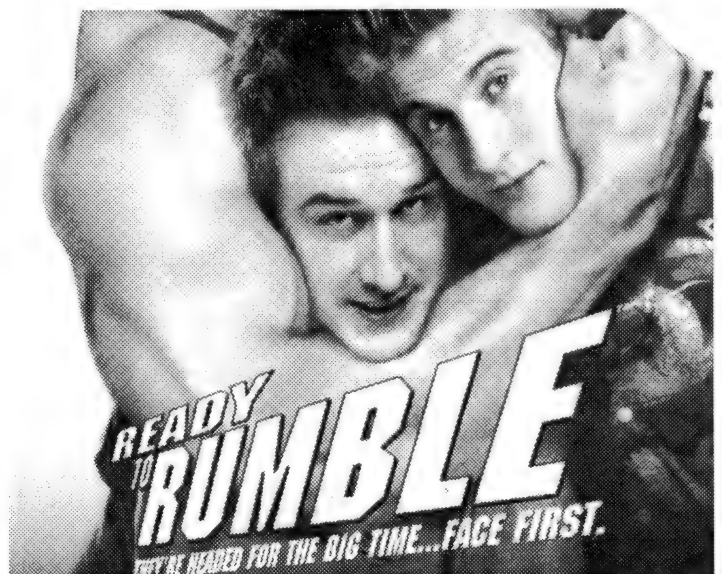
The great comic wrestling movie has yet to be made. Matter of fact, a decent comic wrestling movie has yet to be made and that includes this bit of silliness. What's so hard? Turn on almost any wrestling show on tv and try to keep a straight face for more than two minutes. With *Ready to Rumble* you can go for quite a bit without so much as cracking a smile. That's not to say there aren't some laughs here; there are. Oliver Platt, star-

ring as a redneck moron grappling star named King trying to win back his belt with the aid of waste management specialists David Arquette and Jim Caan's kid, manages a few laughs. Martin Landau in a bit part as a Killer Kowalski trainer brings a borscht-belt sensibility to a thankless part. Rose MacGowan gets to shake a tailfeather in tight hot outfits and takes a ladder to the head for the team. Arquette brings new meaning to the word moron. Plus all manner of famous wrestlers - Goldberg, Macho Man, Sting, Diamond Dallas Page - take dozens of pratfalls for the audience. The problem is that almost nothing interesting happens between the wrestling bits and there's a lot of this nothing put before us before all the wrestling bits. That makes for a lot of what the French call *longueurs*; that's a fancy way of saying "pretty shabby."

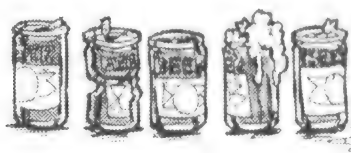


THE KILL-OFF

The Kill-Off only resembles the Jim Thompson novel in some respects but perhaps it's silly to carp about slim pieces of pulp fiction they've read on a dying afternoon while stuffed to the gills on gin and beer. Here, Connecticut becomes New Jersey nightmare where cellulite looks good on women and cystic acne scars give men character. Everything's ugly and nothing makes much sense but all of it possesses the inevitable logic of dream. A dream of winter where everyone's discontented but harridan



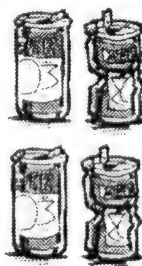
invalid Luanne, working the phones from her phony sickbed, still manages to turn Nowheresville upside down and inside out. Her slightly retarded handyman husband, Ralph, makes with the information. Ralph falls for Danny-Lee a stripper at the bar where he's allowed to sweep up. Pete, the owner of the bar is owed \$10,000 by Luanne. He can't collect because Luanne knows he raped his daughter Myra when she was twelve. And that Bobby, the local drug dealer, has turned Myra into a junkie. Still, Pete thinks he can play the Ralph-Danny-Lee affair to his advantage. There is no maybe in Hell, though, and only Rags the bartender, drinking himself into insensibility at every opportunity, understands this. As do you - mon semblable, - mon frere!



THE IDIOTS

Can't say Ozzy understands why this Danish or Dutch or Holland or what-have-you flick is so celebrated. Oz had to kick the shit out of several questionably dressed men on a recent Saturday nite in Takoma Park just trying to get the video to the rental desk. Yes, it's that popular. So, here's what you get: a bunch of slightly-dazed, Eurotrash hippies camping down in high-fallutin estate while attempting to get in touch with their inner idiot. Uh, okay so, duh, let's take out our penises in the showers of public swimming pools, liberate our uncut hairy vaginas so as to amaze the locals, pretend to be retards and make a general nuisance of ourselves as often as we can. Look, Oz, is all for letting the freak flag fly; still, he ain't gonna sit down for no two hours watching assholes make assholes of themselves. Imagine the Monty Python trip as done by Germans. Not a bad thing, right? And taken thirty minutes at a time, such an approach, concept, what-have-you, could be an absolute hoot, n'est pas? After that? Well, fuhgedaboutit, tape the

damn thing, and play your favorite bits at parties. (No rating for anti-art, non-narrative, pseudo-play hatefulness of the flick as a whole but .

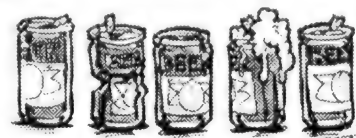


... for any part viewed in twenty-minute segments.)

DOBERMAN

So we got this art student working out in some Paris Conservatory and he wants to be a comic book producer. Movies catch his passing fancy and he winds up making experimental shorts and wiggled out commercials. One involves a basketball

player for the Seattle Supersonics and suddenly Jan Kouens' be pushing a movie. Yes, a movie, one he wrote and directed himself. It's fabulous and involves a crazed bank-robbing gang that lives to kill and kills to live and fucks and plays and brays and eats drugs like they're cornflakes. They carry big weapons and parade problems - transvestism, psychosis, idiocy - as if a gift from God. Surprisingly, they fall afoul of the law and French Central sick the anti-Christ on to them, a cop working so far outside the rules he's a law unto himself. In fact, for him, there is only himself, which is fine with this wild bunch as they are nothing if not solipsistic. Kouens, whose idols are Tex Avery and Sergio Leone, fashions an insane cartoon set in a world bearing little resemblance to any reality with which anyone is familiar. The banks look something like banks, and the apartments look sort of like apartments, but trash dumps and transsexual nightclubs, that which the viewer experience only through dreams and books, draw upon our worst fears. Fears of death and being thought homosexual. So too with the strange figures populating *Doberman*. Hyper-real stick-figures nattering and exploding in psycho-sexual dread while Kouens plays with multiple camera set-ups and the latest in editing effects.



BEYOND THE MAT

God damn, an intellectual documentary about 'rasslin'. So intellectual that The Discovery Channel passed on it for being too thoughtful-like while the Directors' Guild of America done nominated it for best documentary of the year. This leads to the overwhelming question, at least for Oz and hardcore wrestling fans, as to whether this "shit" is any good. Yeah, it is, but not for the reasons you enjoy "good." Kind of more like the reasons you enjoy the Elvis Presley 70s box set: accidental travesty as incidental entertainment. Jake the Snake Roberts boo-hooing about his dad and his daughter; Mankind cuddling with his wife and children while watching his head get split open on video; Vince McMahon pretending he cares - just to let a failed screenwriter (*Police Academy 2*) and now failed documentarian pretend a level-headed analysis of retard-theater makes for art. Certainly stop, look, laugh, but don't delude yourself for a minute that you've been granted any more than a glimpse behind the insanity that asks actors

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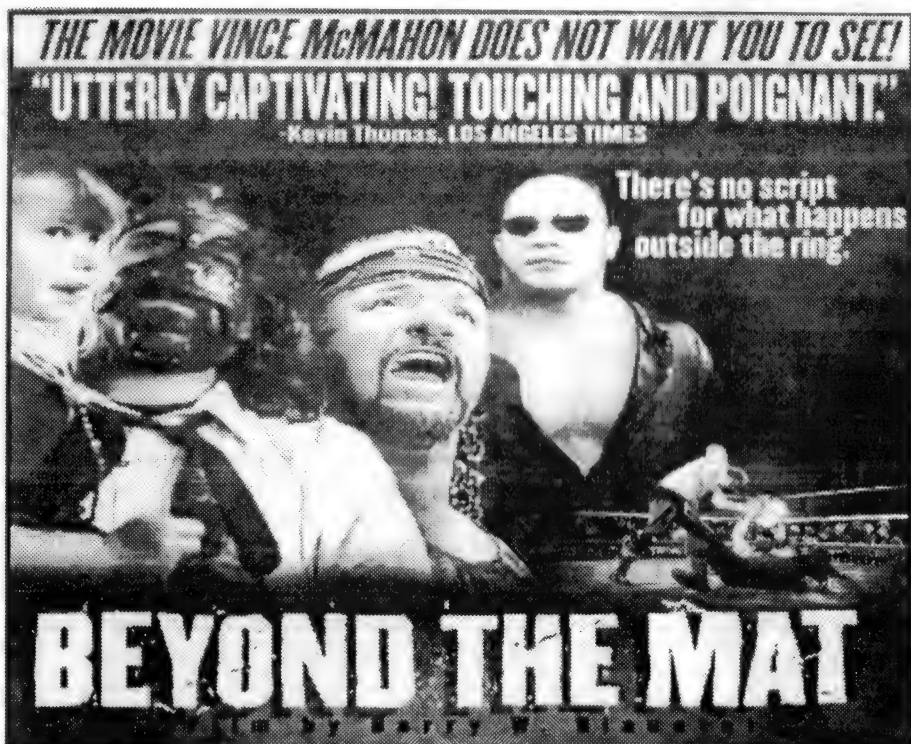
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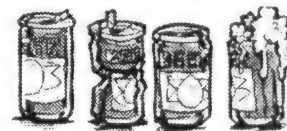
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to wreck their bodies and souls for a few cheap laughs. The real poop - what happens before and after America drinks up and goes home, that's left in the dark.



FINAL DESTINATION

Anxious Alex has a premonition while boarding a flight to Paris with his high school classmates. In fact, it's more than a premonition, it's a full blown hallucination and in it the plane and all its passengers get cooked in mid-air. Alex awakes, goes mental and gets thrown off the plane along with a few friends and a classmate who takes a swing at him. Sure enough the plane explodes shortly after take off and a spirit is unleashed, the spirit of Rube Goldberg, as the filmmakers obviously working without a script, build these fantastic contraptions designed to trap and then messily do away with our survivors. It's a tedious affair enlivened only by a few humorously messy deaths and the occasional



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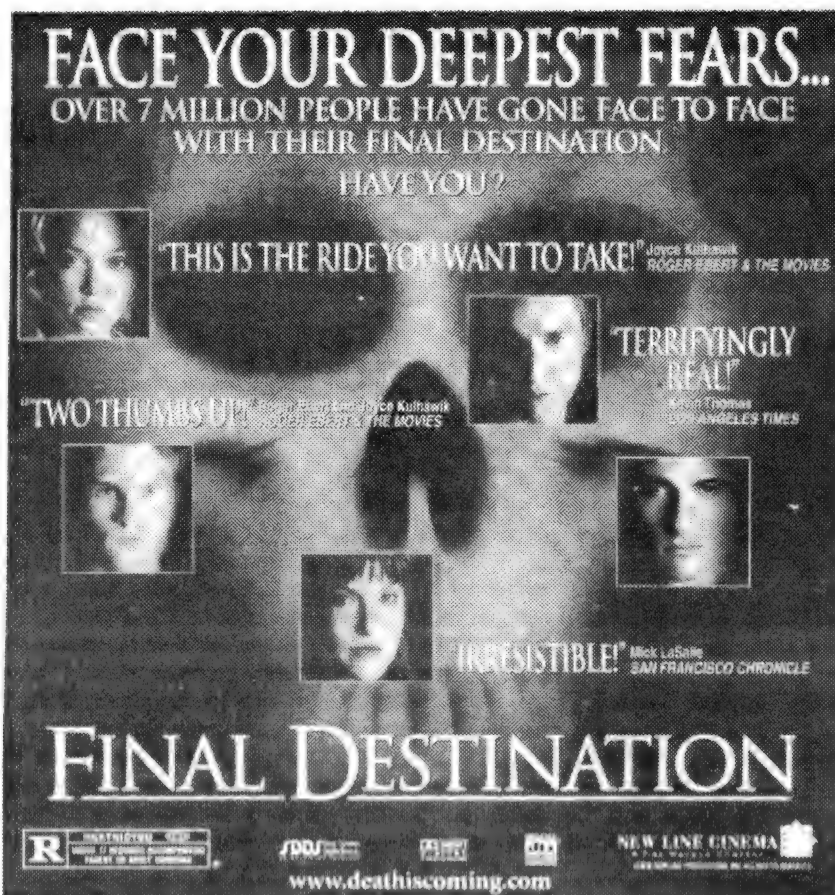
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sight of Alex's lovely pneumatic girlfriend in tight workout tee's. Ozzy would have ankled after the first half hour or so but He kept his tuchas in the seat in the hope that the young lovely would doff her duds for the inevitable shower scene. But it never came and Oz found himself alone in a theater that had rapidly emptied long before the credits came around. Ah! What we creative types must suffer for our art!



AMERICAN PSYCHO

Alright! That's it! No more letting girls make horror films. Not that director Mary Harron shouldn't get some kind of medal for even attempting to film the unreadable Bret Easton Ellis novel of the same name; still, did she have to make the flick, save for Christian Bale's suave performance, neigh unto unwatchable? Well, actually, it's quite watchable with ear plugs thanks to the beautiful, pristine sheen cinematographer Andrej Sekula (*Pulp Fiction*) has given it; but Ozzy didn't have ear plugs so there HE sat, slumping ever deeper in His seat, forced to tough out a motion picture about "nothing" that said "nothing," not even so much as "Hey Kids, the 80s were really materialistic!" And we can lay all the blame at Harron's feet as her previous work, the witty and powerful independent feature, *I Shot Andy Warhol*, showed she knew what to do with a camera. Gorehounds looking for blood and nudity can forget it, it's all been eschewed for the non-message. Lunatics wondering where the hungry vagina sequence went to need to up their dosage of thorazine.



IT HAPPENED HERE

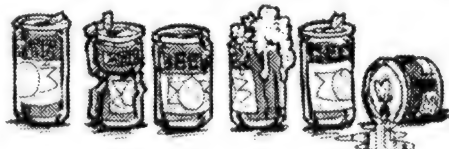
Deutschland Uber U.K.! Germany wins WW II and occupies what rapidly becomes a not so Merrie Olde Englande. The green-fielded countryside in the process of permanent evacuation, half of London bombed out, food and medicine a scarcity and the radio playing nothing but German marches and beer hall sing-a-longs. The Jews, of course, have been placed in a fenced-in ghetto. What's worse, although there is an underground resistance, many many English are collaborating with their conquerors to ensure a smooth Nationalist Socialist transition. One of whom is Pauline Murray, a recently transported nurse from an outlying district. Our story takes place largely through her eyes and it is a grim and shocking one. After being forced to leave her home in partisan-active Salisbury, Murray, avowedly apolitical refuses involvement with the black-shirted Immediate Action Organization (IA) running the country for the Nazis. It's either join or slow starvation so Murray signs on, eventually convincing herself that England's only hope for returning to normalcy lies in total subjugation to the collaborationist government. Slowly, and to her and our growing horror, she



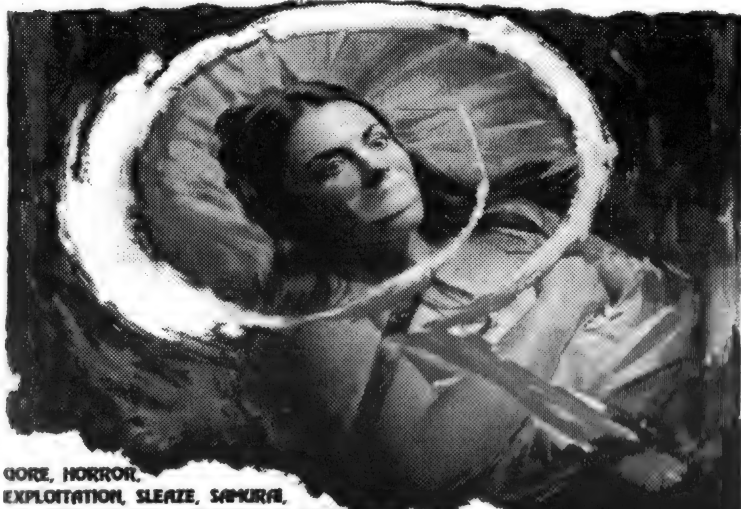
learns what Hitler's brand of fascism entails.

This chilling black and white feature, produced by British filmmakers and writers Kevin Brownlow and Andrew Mollo, began production in 1958 when the pair were mere striplings. Eight years and twenty-one thousand dollars later when the film finally saw the light of day it was met with howls of protest from Jewish groups in Britain. The controversy revolved around a disturbing seven minute sequence in which real life British Nazis expounded on racial theories and the Jewish "problem." Apparently the Jewish community feared that the more credulous in the audience would wind-up "Seig Heiling" the screen after taking in the scene. Ridiculous, as *It Happened Here* leaves little doubt as to where its sympathies lie. Perhaps, part of the problem for the protestors was the film's realistic look. Although Mollo and Brownlow employed no archival footage, much of the finished work possesses the grainy quality of a 40s newsreel. Moreover, everything one sees here - tanks, trucks, double-decker buses, uniforms, etc. - is authentic. Co-scenarist Mollo, an avid war historian and film collector, went to immoderate lengths to ensure every detail, even the pictures hung on the walls, bore the stamp of legitimacy. Overkill perhaps; nevertheless, the filmmakers appear to have been just as fastidious with the script and in the editing room. *Schindler's List* this may not be, but in its own quiet way, *It Happened Here* will wind up unsettling you just as much.

-B



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Dear BRUTARIAN reader, please forgive this humble reviewer his two-issue disappearance. During these last eight months, yours truly has been force-fed a VERY expensive lesson in the workings of the legal system, and in NY State's Libel laws in particular.

I won't go into the painful details here, but will say simply that if the sort of frivolous lawsuit I'm currently suffering is allowed to flourish, the Internet may soon be turned into a vast commercial wasteland, scrubbed bare of the most minute particle of satire.

For those who find yourselves intrigued, please visit my website at: www.dannyhellman.com, and the sad clown head will explain it all to you.

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CHURN (Issues 3 & 4) by Bruno D. Nadalin.

BRUTARIAN's own guiding light Dom Salemi has an uncanny knack for rooting out tomorrow's cartooning stars today, while they're still toiling away in obscurity. From under some rock they inflict their hateful insanity on an unsuspecting world via the dubious medium of self-published comic books, but with one flick of Dom's flashlight, they are catapulted into the glamorous and lucrative world of big-time comics stardom.

In a recent issue of BRUTARIAN we were introduced to ANGRY YOUTH COMIX's Johnny Ryan, (whose cover art adorns the issue you're now holding). And in the PREVIOUS issue, the strong, sure hand of Dom forcefully turned our heads in the direction of one Bruno D. Nadalin, a Hoboken, N.J. resident who surely qualifies for the title of COMICDOM'S FOULEST SCRIBBLER.

During my few wrong-headed visits to Hoboken, I'd gotten the feeling that there was something fundamentally wrong wwith the place. It was as if some ancient evil was shrieking silently from beneath the very paving stones that lie in the shadow of the abandoned Maxwell House factory, (perhaps the souls of the unborn who snuffed it at the business end of Mama Sinatra's coat hanger). But after seeing an issue of **CHURN**, I realize it was just bad vibes emanating from this fellow Nadalin all along.

CHURN's 3 & 4 are roughly twenty pages each; your standard B&W 8 1/2 by 11 homemade comic-type situation. The motto beneath the logo on the cover of Issue #3 is "Liberate The Retard Within", and I can't imagine a better way to do that than by opening Bruno Nadalin's pages of sin.

There you'll enjoy lots of lovingly

drawn one panel gags (that aren't so much funny as they are appalling) on the themes of Man-Boy Love, Christianity, and the many moods of Adolf Hitler.

But sandwiched in-between these indigestible nuggets of nihilism are longer, more satisfying strips. One of my favorites is that rare specimen, an autobiographical strip that manages to avoid being a dismal exercise in self-indulgence. *Through The Doors Of Stupidity* is an entertaining coming-of-age tale in which young Nadalin bridges the gap between adolescence and manhood boogeying in his Fruit-Of-The-Looms to the tune of "Light My Fire".

Another choice morsel is the hilarious *Virgil*, wherein a lovestruck, urine-soaked dweeb follows the dubious advice of a talking squirrel, and is brought ultimately to that best-of-all-possible-endings, namely being cornholed in a prison cell by a muscular, well-endowed black gentleman.

(This is a situation that my colleague Sam Henderson would certainly agree is "always funny").



Nadalin's drawing style is best described as a delightfully lumpy mixture comprised of two heaping tablespoons of Basil Wolverton and a half-ounce of Jack T. Chick, with a hot loaf of Dr. Seuss pinched on top as a garnish.

Issues of *CHURN* may be sought by writing to BRUNO D. NADALIN P.O. BOX 142 HOBOKEN, NJ 07030.

If there's a price anywhere on these rags, I'm damned if I can find it. I think a small pile of singles should cover it until further notice, (the man responsible for this filth seems less interested in getting his hands on your cash than he is in obtaining a signed age statement from any and all takers, so you'd better give him one).

And again, in the fine BRUTARIAN tradition, you should be able to enjoy a sample of Nadalin's work elsewhere in this very same issue, making this review, as always, entirely redundant.

◆◆◆

Jesus Christ IS Lord.
Sean Connery IS James Bond.
Sam Henderson IS humor

Maybe you don't agree with the first two statements, (don't even try to talk to me about Roger Moore), but I don't want to hear ANY argument about the third.

I know you; You probably think you know the difference between what's funny and what's just plain stupid.

But if the Gestapo were holding your mother at gunpoint, ordering you to explain to them the sub-atomic structure of the Funny Molecule, you'd probably just cry and crap in your pants. (take my word for it, you would definitely crap in your pants; I know you.)

But Sam Henderson wouldn't crap in his pants. He'd explain to them in a calm, academic tone that the angle of the dangle is equal to the heat of the meat.

And while those sausage-sucking arschfickers are scratching their pointy heads trying to keep up with him, Sam'll yank your grateful mom from their clutches, drop his drawers to show them his prize-winning ass, and rappel down the sheer face of the Berghof while peppering 'em with hot lead.

"What the fuck are you talking

about?" I hear you say.

Don't be coy; I'm talking about Sam Henderson, the modern-day Albert

Einstein of Humor, whose own Special Theory of Relativity, *THE MAGIC WHISTLE BLOWS* has recently been published by St. Martin's Press.

"I'll BET it blows", I hear you say.

Well, FUCK YOU.

THE MAGIC WHISTLE BLOWS is jam-packed with the best of Sam's sure-fire, guaranteed-to-make-you-laugh-until-you-bleed-from-every-orifice cartoons, all drawn in an unmistakable style that

best resembles a fusion of cartoon legends Sergio Aragones and Virgil Parth drawing under the influence of powerful animal tranquilizers

And that's not all; you'll come for the thermonuclear gags, but you'll STAY for the delightful antics of Sam's unforgettable creation DIRTY DANNY™, who's sure to take ratty old Snoopy's place as America's best-loved and most widely-merchandised cartoon icon!

THE MAGIC WHISTLE BLOWS does not have numbered pages, but is certainly thick enough to keep you busy for the better part of an afternoon. It sells for \$9.95, and is available at fine bookstores and less-than-fine comic shops everywhere.

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Take it from me, there's nothing like a frivolous lawsuit to put a damper on one's world travels. But a man can still dream, can't he?

Damn straight he can; especially

when he's got help from books like *STREET GRAPHICS INDIA* by Barry Dawson.

Hopefully you've had the good fortune as I've had to live near an Indian neighborhood. And hopefully you've taken a tantalizing peek at the unusual products and bric-a-brac that line the shelves of most Indo-Pak grocery shops, (like prismatic decals of monkey-god Hanuman surrounded by bold swastikas, glossy posters of the goddess Kali festooned with severed heads, etc.).

Well, this book ups the ante, and may even have you dusting off that MasterCard while you frantically try to get Air India on the telephone.

STREET GRAPHICS INDIA keeps the requisite dry editorializing to a minimum, and instead bombards you with hundreds of stunning, full-color photos. These photos feature a dazzling variety of commercial display art from all over India, including signage, outdoor advertising, package design, painted vehicles, and much more.

You'll see gorgeously hand-painted billboards for Bollywood blockbusters, their swaggering stars doing their level best to emit waves of machismo from behind their Ray-

Bans. Plus there's plenty of religious icons, shop signs featuring some delightfully broken English, stirring political murals, kooky cigarette and fireworks wrappers, and some TRULY strange comic book covers.

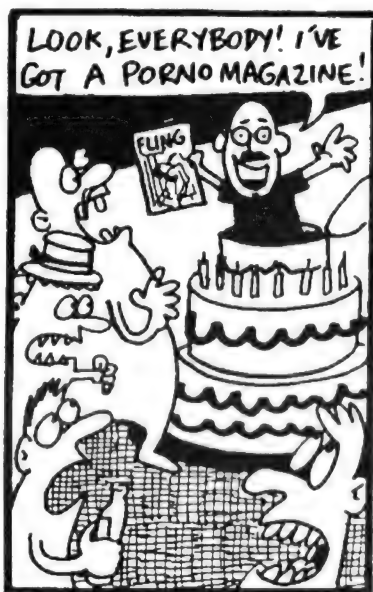
STREET GRAPHICS INDIA lets you know that a visit to that exotic subcontinent will surely leave you with enduring memories filled with countless visual delights, (as well as a crudely intestinal parasite or two). \$19.95 from Thames & Hudson, trade paperback.

◆◆◆

DORI STORIES, (\$19.95 from Last Gasp).

Fans of the seminal mid-'80's underground anthology comic book *WEIRDO* will certainly recall the unique, unforgettable work of the late Dori Seda.

In a time when female cartoonists were even fewer and further between



than they are now, Dori Seda stood out from the grungy pack with strips that matched her male counterparts in gross-out content as well as drawing ability

What the boys COULDN'T keep up with was the humanity and sweetness in Dori's strips. Here was a cartoonist living life to it's fullest, and putting every drop of her hilarious, heart-breaking existence down in black and white.

Sadly, Dori Seda stopped breathing in 1988 at age 36, (due to a variety of serious lung ailments, a bad dose of flu, and God knows what else).



I can't decide which thought is sadder; wondering what Dori's work would be like today had she lived, or considering the possibility that her many wonderful strips might soon be forgotten, as has the work of so many other talented artists who died young, (Rory Hayes, anybody?).

Thankfully, the Specter of Obscurity that had been menacing Dori's tomb has been beaten back by the efforts of editor Don Donahue, publisher Ron Turner of Last Gasp, and long-time friends of Dori's like Leslie Sternbergh, Adam Alexander, and others.

Together, they have assembled *DORI STORIES*, a comprehensive collection of Dori's painstakingly-drawn, raunchily hilarious strips, accompanied by several personal remembrances penned by close pals who miss her a WHOLE lot. The book even

reprints a couple of the racy '40's-style Photo-Funnies, (starring Dori in glamour-model mode) that originally ran in early issues of *Weirdo*.

An absolute must-have for anyone who remembers Dori, never knew Dori, or just loves underground comics, (200 pages, in trade paperback format from Last Gasp).

◆◆◆

A female cartoonist who's very much alive is Boston's Leela Corman, who's recently self-published a handsome comic book offering entitled *QUEEN'S DAY* (with a grant from the Xeric Foundation).

QUEEN'S DAY

contains three dreamlike vignettes:

The Baba Yaga, The Myth Of Never Being Sick A Day In Your Life, and Koninginnendag. My favorite of the three strips is the first, which attempts to rehabilitate

the reputation of a famous witch out of Russian folklore. The two that follow would seem to be meditations on mourning and listlessness; all three strips are drawn in a bold,

brushy style, in large open panels that are often compositionally stunning. If you can't locate a comic shop that sells this arty little 70-paged number for \$4.95, then go look for it on that fucking Internet.

◆◆◆

Case-hardened pornographer that I am, I never pass up an opportunity to tip my hat to the old masters; geniuses of graphic smut like Tom of Finland, Bill Ward, and

Eric Stanton.

Now author A.J. Maclean and the one-handed archivists at England's Erotic Print Society have brought to light the rare erotic drawings of an obscure U.K. illustrator who could kick out the jams with the best of America's smutty scribblers.

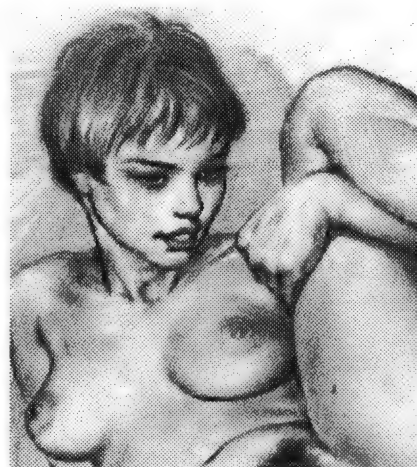
THE SECRET ART OF TOM POULTON starts off with a lengthy series of intros by Maclean, who gives

us a sketchy bio of the artist, as well as an informative essay detailing the British pornography industry's tortuously slow crawl out of Queen Victoria's bleak shadow in the second half of the 20th century.

The intros make for an interesting read, but the approximately 100 black

& white pencil drawings will make you forget ALL about whatever you'd just read, 'cause this guy Tom Poulton could DRAW, mister.

Sure the art in *THE SECRET ART*



OF TOM POULTON is truly filthy; scenes of terrified couples caught in flagrante delicto, office gals indulging forbidden sapphic urges behind their typewriters, old geezers doing their best to keep up with pneumatic nymphettes, etc.

But in addition to being a pervert, this bastard Poulton was one of those mid-century commercial artists with *unbelievably* well-honed drawing chops. So when you spot me drooling with this book in my lap, let me assure you that my salivations have more to do with the way Poulton makes it look SO EASY, and not necessarily those lovingly-rendered glands, (yeah, RIGHT).

Following the sketches are two clunky examples of the home-made English porn novella circa 1950, which I imagine are included to round out some middle-aged U.K. pervo's nostalgic flashback, but who gives a fuck about that.

THE SECRET ART OF TOM POULTON is a 156-page trade paperback, published by the Erotic Print Society, and is available for \$18.95.

◆◆◆

And now, take my hand as we slip into that mysterious gray area I like to call "Massaging the Advertisers"!

◆◆◆

ATTENTION ALL CHRONIC SELF-ABUSERS STRICKEN WITH A YEN FOR YELLOW TAIL!!!!

The Lord God has spoken His word unto Asian Cult Cinema's Thomas Weisser, and your New Testament awaits!!!!

No, it's not **THE BOOK OF MORMON** or **DIANETICS**, but something far more entertaining; namely **THE SEX FILMS: JAPANESE CINEMA ENCYCLOPEDIA!!!** (Actually, **DIANETICS** would've been a catchier title, if somewhat misleading).

Clearly a labor of obsessive love by authors Thomas Weisser and Yuko Mihara Weisser, this 600 page softcover doorstop provides **HUNDREDS** of detailed reviews of depraved Japanese porn flicks, (the vast majority of which I'm sure you and I will never, ever manage to see in our brief lifetimes).

Thank the aforementioned GOD that there's a book like this one to help us find our way through a seemingly endless swamp of these soy sauce-soaked smut films.

Films with enticing titles like **LEGEND OF THE BIG PENIS: BEAUTIFUL MYSTERY**, and **NURSE'S SECRET CHART: RANDY WHITE UNIFORMS**, as well as **LATEST BATHHOUSE SEX TECHNIQUES: PALACE OF THE SOAPSUD PRINCESS**, not to mention **DIRTY MOLESTER TRAIN**.

I'll have you know that the reviews contained in **THE SEX FILMS: JAPANESE CINEMA ENCYCLOPEDIA**, (describing rich, complex plots where quivering salarymen deploy their knot-tying skills on docile housewives, and office girls are dry-humped by weirdos aboard speeding bullet trains) don't excite this reviewer nearly as much as would a book of explicit photos of Godzilla chewing the heads off of King Ghidorah.

But don't get the impression that yours truly wouldn't happily take a guilty peek at ANY of these films

during some boozy visit to Casa **BRUTARIAN**.

I ask you, WHO among us would be strong enough to avert their eyes, rather than peek at a few moments of **SECRET HONEYMOON: RAPE TRAIN**, or **TOP SECRET ACCOUNT OF**

JAPANESE CUSTOMS AND MANNERS: BREASTS, were they popped into the VCR?

Not I, good sir or madam; certainly not THIS weak-willed, fragile and all-too human soul who stands, or rather, sits comfortably before you.

Even more difficult to avoid staring at are the countless titillating posters and stills from these deplorable films, many reproduced here in full color for your onanistic enjoyment. Throw in an intro by Naomi Tani, (star of **WIFE TO BE SACRIFICED**), plus

exhaustive appendices and filmographies, and you've surely got your twenty-eight dollars worth, you friggin' prevert.



Being a sophisticated Manhattanite with easy access to a multitude of plush video parlors bursting with obscure flicks, the thought of renting videos by mail seems completely alien to me.

But in a unique moment of empathy, I realized that the average **BRUTARIAN** reader inhabits a tiny lean-to in the backwoods of West Virginia, miles from the nearest Blockbuster, (where the best film one might hope to find would be a **CASPER** movie).

And so, it is with no small amount of admiration that I bring to your attention the generous public service provided by Mr. Ken Kish and the

charitable institution which he calls **VIDEO WASTELAND**.

With the help of the sizable **VIDEO WASTELAND RENTAL, REFERENCE AND REVIEW GUIDE**, toothless, web-footed **BRUTARIAN** subscribers from all over this heap of dung we call America can sample Ken Kish's sumptuous treasure trove of sleazy videos by having them conveniently hand-delivered to their door by a uniformed civil servant. (Now don't worry, readers. It's not the ATF; it's just the nice mailman with your rented copy of **SANTO VERSUS THE VAMPIRE WOMEN**; you can put away that customized AK-47).

The **VIDEO WASTELAND RENTAL, REFERENCE AND REVIEW GUIDE** could almost be called a book, as it has 158 pages bound in a glossy paperback cover, and is sprinkled with a smattering of B&W horror poster repros, as well as some **TRULY** gruesome fan art by the likes of Dale Vied and Don England.

And, also like a book, the **VIDEO WASTELAND RENTAL, REFERENCE AND REVIEW GUIDE** provides some degree of entertainment, as Ken Kish has clearly seen ALL of these awful movies, and has more than a few smart-assed comments to make about most of them.

But it's NOT a book; it's a CATALOG.

A catalog that will stand proudly next to genuine books on your shelf, taking up valuable space.

A catalog that has taught me at least ONE thing I hadn't known before opening its pages; namely that somewhere out there is a film entitled **CALIGULA REINCARNATED AS HITLER**, (also known as **GESTAPO'S LAST ORGY**).

Most importantly, it's a catalog that

can be obtained when you contact the fine folks at **VIDEO WASTELAND**
214 FAIR STREET BEREA, OHIO 44017, or visit the website at:
<http://slaughter.net/wasteland>



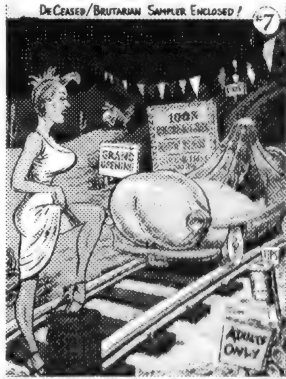
So, 'til next time, please keep your head out of the oven. Do it for me!



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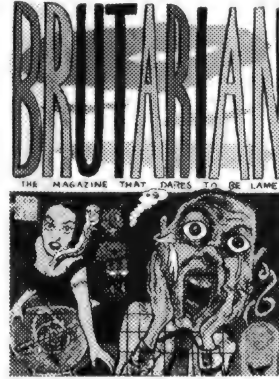
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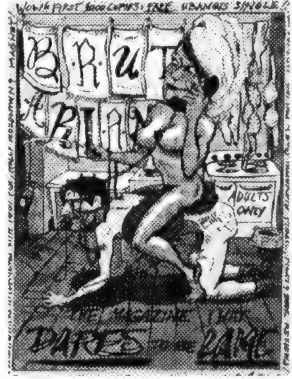
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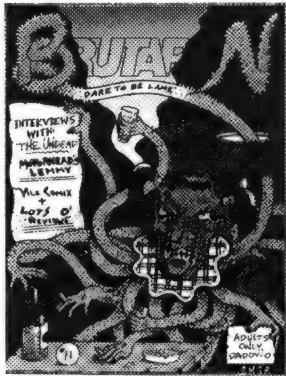
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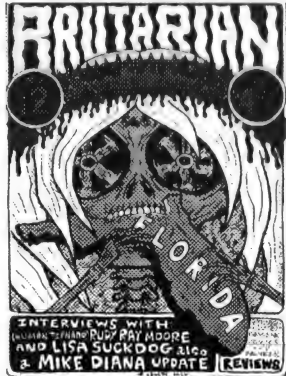
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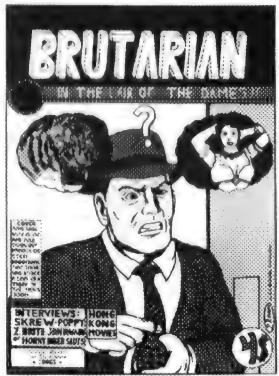
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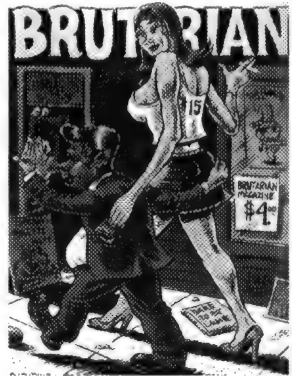
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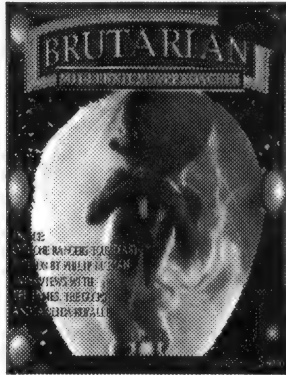
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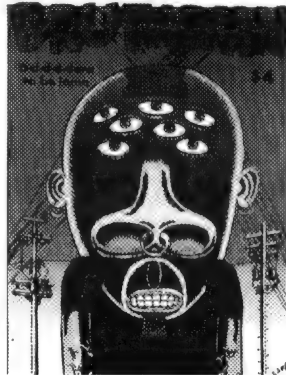
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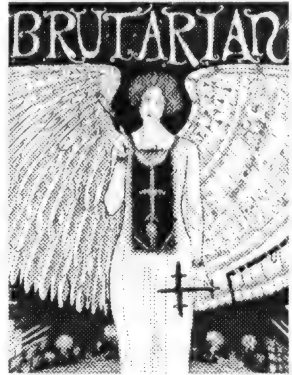
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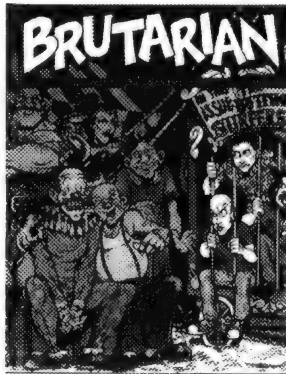
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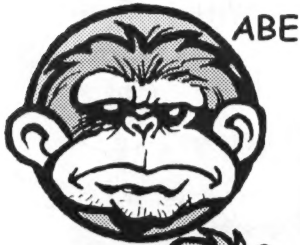
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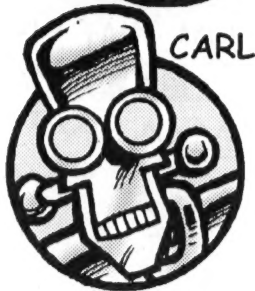
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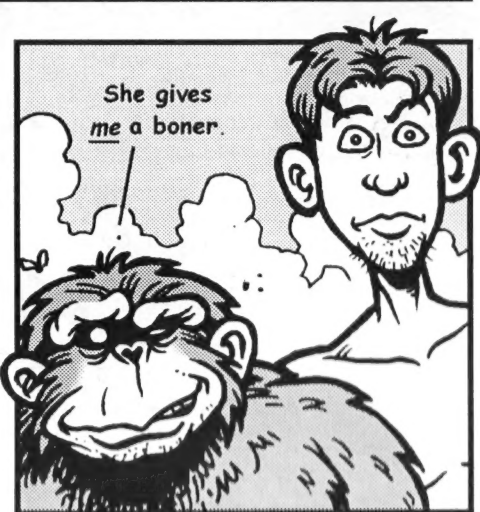
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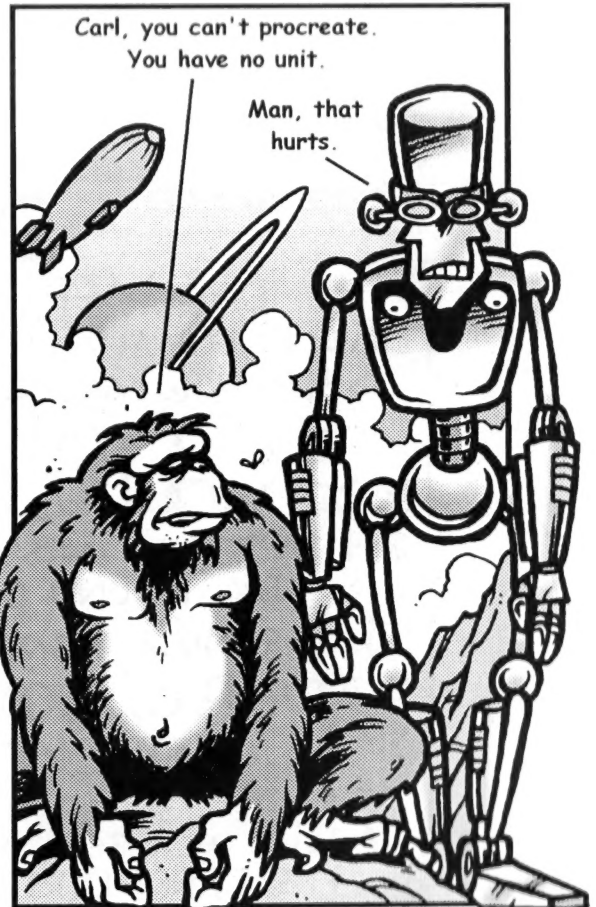


Yeah, and she doesn't get YOU hot?

Well, I find her mind attractive. And her ample bosom and well proportioned hips would suit procreative needs.

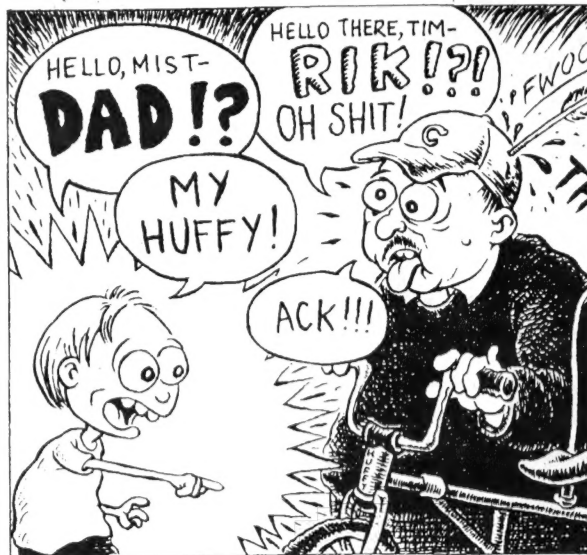


You two are libido driven.



— END —

RITALIN RIK & HIS PAL Sick Nick in 'The Best Laid Plans'...



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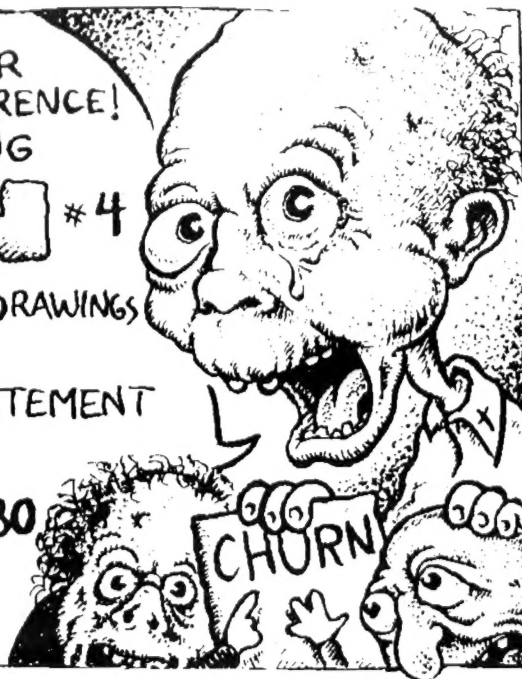
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